EVENINGS

IN THE

SOUTH OF FRANCE.

FROM THE FRENCH OF MADAME GUIZOT.

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H.Dacre del.

GARDEN STUDIES.

P.S.Duval Lith.Ph.

PREFACE.

Among the most successful book-contributors to the entertainment and instruction of the young in the present day, is Madame Guizot, the lady of the distinguished French minister of that name. A volume from her pen was published some time since, entitled, "*A Year in the Country*," in which a family circle, dwelling in the South of France, is represented in the enjoyment of agreeable conversation on various subjects, interesting, either for their utility or singularity. Some of

the topics are so local or national as to be without particular attraction to American readers; but those which the compiler has selected seem to be of general interest.

Though the present volume is not a literal translation from the French, the facts, and whatever there is of vivacity and interest in the style of narration, are to be put to the credit of Madame Guizot.

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THE RAIN AND THE COCOA TREE.

"RAIN! rain! rain! all day!"

Louisa hardly noticed it in the morning, as she was busy with her lessons; but in the afternoon, her mother being unexpectedly engaged, the little girl was left alone with her work. In place of going on industriously, she stopped every moment to see if the rain had ceased, and kept grieving that she had lost her walk. By means of this, she had made slow advances; and before she was aware of it, night set in. Louisa went to the window, and seeing that it rained as fast as ever, she exclaimed in a fit of weariness and impatience,

"This provoking rain will never have an end."

"And what is there so dreadful in the rain, my dear?" said her mother, who at that instant came into the room.

Louisa, a little ashamed at being thus caught, replied,

"Oh! mother, when it rains it is so dull, we cannot go out; and now it has not stopped a single in-

stant the whole day: it is too bad, we have had such an unpleasant time."

"It is very likely, my dear, but that is your fault, not the rain's. Instead of passing your time in vexing yourself by thinking what you could have done if it had been a fine day, if you had only gone industriously to work,—if you had only said to yourself, 'Since I cannot go out, I can find plenty to do at home, and some amusement too,' in that case the hours would not have seemed so long, for idleness and laziness certainly bring with them weariness.

"But seriously, Louisa, I have a greater fault to reprove you with, for your complaints of the weather. You do not think who sends the sun and the rain. Reflect a little and tell me who is our sovereign to give us which he pleases?"

Louisa. God, certainly, dear mother.

Mrs. Beaumont. Well, then, it is God you reproach, in complaining of the weather. I dare say you did it from want of thought, but then you must accustom yourself to reflection, without which you will often be hurried into faults you would have wished to avoid. It is common to be dissatisfied when the weather is not so fine as we like, but a truly Christian heart has different feelings. Do you not remember the shepherd of Salisbury Plain?* He

* Published by the American Sunday-school Union.

was exposed to all weathers in guarding his flocks, and even in his poor hut; but still he found that whatever the weather was, it was the best,—simply because God sent it.

Louisa saw the truth of all her mother had said. She was accustomed to self-examination, and although her levity often led her to commit faults, she was easily brought to see and confess them. She stood still a moment, without saying any thing, and then, approaching her mother, she confessed that she had done wrong in complaining, "for," added she, "since the rain only comes by the will of God, we should not complain, even though it disappoints and vexes us."

Mrs. Beaumont. You speak like a child, my dear, for you confess one fault and then fall into another of the same kind. Ask of the Lord, my child, that you may become more thoughtful and reflecting.

Here Mrs. Beaumont was interrupted by the farmer, who, being in the neighbourhood, stopped at the door to speak to her. He was wet and dirty.

"Good evening, Peter, you are doubtless tired and sick of the rain," said Mrs. Beaumont,—looking sideways at her daughter.

"I, madam! By no means," said the farmer; "we sowed our grain some time ago, and if the dry weather had lasted, the crop would have turned out very badly; so that when I saw, this morning, that

it was really raining, I was truly glad and said to my wife, 'Let us bless the Lord for his goodness! He sends the rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons.' So many poor people suffer when the crop is short, that timely rains are a blessing from God. I am very thankful for the rain then, though wet feet and wet clothes are a little disagreeable, to be sure."

The worthy farmer left them, and Mrs. Beaumont resumed the conversation with her little girl.

"Peter came very opportunely, my dear, to tell you how much good the rain does. Yes, if we had nothing but the fine weather, which pleases you so much, we should have no harvests and should soon be reduced to famine. The usefulness of the rain stops not here. It supplies the fountains, the brooks, and the streams, which are of so great service and pleasure to us. I could say a great deal more about it, but I have said enough to let you see how unreasonably and rashly you formed your opinion. It is true, this rain may become, on the other hand, a calamity. Sometimes, when it falls too heavily, it produces inundations which destroy the harvest and do great damage. But for all this, complaints and murmurs are not the less to be blamed; and we ought to humble ourselves before God, who can turn against us his most useful gifts, to punish our sins and bring us back to himself.

"As you grow older, you will find the cause of

disappointments and vexations in which you had before perceived no design. Recollect your ill-humour about the rain, and learn that as your childishness prevented you from seeing its advantages, (though in truth easily to be perceived,) in the same way we are all children in the sight of God. We must all give ourselves up to him entirely, being persuaded that all that comes from him is designed for our good; and if there are things painful to the flesh, be assured we shall find them profitable to the spirit, if we only submit ourselves with entire resignation to the designs of our almighty friend and benefactor."

By this time Louisa had made such an abundant confession of her fault, and had shown herself so truly sorry, that her mother had no need to continue her reproofs.

The evening had now set in. Charles came in with a lamp and a large book. He had got through with his tasks, and he had been so entirely occupied that he had no time to think of the rain. His father was pleased with him, and told him that they would pass the evening together; and that he would show him a beautiful engraving, and explain to him what it meant. Charles, very much pleased, went to get the book for his father, and told his sister how he intended to pass the evening.

"You shall listen, too," said he. "I know you will be amused."

Louisa blushed, she knew that she did not deserve to be amused. Her mother, seeing her confusion, said to her, in an under-tone,

"Since you have confessed your faults and feel it deeply, I should be sorry to inflict any further punishment on you. I only wish you to remember it, and to make you more careful in future."

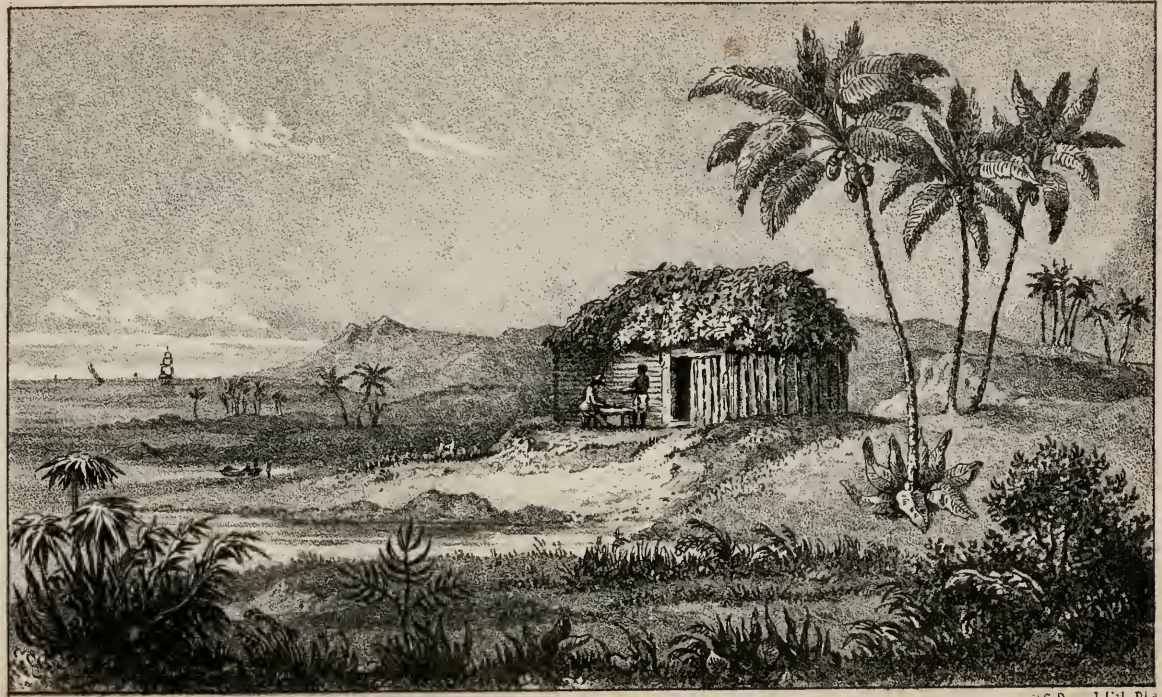
Louisa. Oh! mother, I will ask in my prayers, to-night and every night, for grace to amend.

"Very well, my dear," said her mother.

Louisa, with a light heart, now set about helping Charles to arrange the table, the book, and the chairs. Then she went after her little sister Julia, who liked to look at pictures. She put her on an arm-chair, and when their father arrived he found all his little family ready to listen to him.

"Well, my dear children," said Mr. Beaumont, "we are going to pass the evening together, and since the rain has kept you from your walk, I will try to make up for it by telling you something amusing and instructive. Every kind of weather has its pleasures. If fine weather allows more exercise, this is more favourable for these pleasant family gatherings in the evening, round the fire, when the labours of the day are over. Open the book at the place which I have marked, Charles. Now look at this tree, children."

Louisa. Oh! what a beauty! I have never seen



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P.S. Duval lith Ph.

any thing like it before, not even in M. de Monval's garden, who has so many different kinds.

Charles. I dare say you have not. It does not grow in this country,—it is only in the Indies and in very warm climates that it grows. Is it not, father?

"Yes, my son, it is a cocoa tree. It belongs to the family of palms, which we call trees, on account of their size and height, although botanists call them plants, because their trunk is not of solid wood, like that of other trees, and besides, because they have no branches. Just look at it; the trunk is entirely bare and surmounted by a large bunch of leaves. The inequalities which you see upon the trunk, at nearly equal distances, forming as it were a ring, are produced by the leaves which fall in proportion as the tree grows. The trunk is not thick for its height, which is from forty to sixty feet; it is not generally straight; it grows narrower as it grows taller, and is terminated by a cluster of ten or twelve leaves."

Louisa. A tree which only has twelve leaves; it seems impossible.

Mr. Beaumont. Yes, if we judge of them by those leaves which we are accustomed to see; and I admit that a bunch of twelve leaves of a plane tree or a chestnut would not make much show; but the wise Architect of nature understands not only how to

make things useful, but also to render them agreeable by their elegant forms and just proportions: and although the cocoa tree has but few leaves, they are ten or twelve feet long, and about three feet broad; some are raised, others are spread out, or hanging, which gives to this tree a very agreeable appearance. Look at the engraving, and you will form a correct idea of it.

Charles. Now, father, give us, if you please, some idea of the fruit of this tree.

Mr. Beaumont. That is just what I am going to do. Flowers, of a yellowish white, issue from between the leaves, supported upon stems and arranged in a tapering ear. To these flowers succeed large fruit, in bunches like grapes. In a little time this fruit becomes somewhat like an ostrich egg, and then grows much larger; and when at full size, three corners, very much rounded, appear upon the outer covering. This outer wrapping is fibrous and gray, and within we find a nut, of which the shell is brown, hard and smooth. In this shell is enclosed a large kernel, whose taste has some resemblance to that of the filbert, only much more delicate.

"This tree, my dear children, is well calculated to make us feel in a peculiar manner the care which our kind heavenly Father exercises over us. In the first place, consider this fruit, how well wrapped up and defended it is! The tree grows generally on

the shore of the sea, into which, in consequence, its fruit is in danger of falling, and if it were not so well protected, would decay and rot without being of any service. As it is, they float without the moisture penetrating it, and then are gathered without being the least injured. In fine, every part of the cocoa tree is of use, and to make you understand it, I will tell you what I have read in a book of travels.—In pursuing his journey, a traveller arrived at the lonely hut of a native of the Indies. It was surrounded with cocoa trees, but there was no sign of cultivation besides. The traveller met with hospitality in this humble abode. His host offered him first an acid drink, which satisfied his thirst and refreshed him. When the hour for the repast was arrived, the Indian served up various viands contained in a brown dish, shining and polished. He set before him also some wine of an extremely agreeable flavour. Towards the end of the meal, he regaled his guest with some juicy sweetmeats, and made him taste some very good brandy. The astonished traveller asked the Hindoo, who supplied him with all these things?

"'My cocoa trees,' answered he. 'The drink which I offered you is drawn from the fruit before it becomes ripe, and there are some nuts which contain three or four pounds. This kernel, so agreeably flavoured, is the fruit in its maturity. The milk,

which you find so pleasant, is taken from the kernel. This cabbage, so delicate, is the top of a cocoa tree; but this is a treat which cannot be enjoyed often, because the cocoa tree from which it is taken dies soon after. The wine, which also pleased you so, is furnished by the cocoa tree; to get at it, we make incisions in the young stalks of the flowers, a white liquor flows out, which we gather in pitchers, and which is known by the name of palm wine. When exposed to the sun it becomes sour, and furnishes me with vinegar. This same juice provides me with the sugar for the sweetmeats which I have made with the nut. In conclusion, all these vessels and utensils which we use at table are made with the shell of the cocoa-nut. That is not all; my habitation itself I owe entirely to these precious trees: their wood serves to construct my hut with; their dry leaves, when interlaced, form its roof,—arranged like a parasol, they keep the sun from me while I am walking; the garments which cover me are woven of the fibres of the leaves; these mats, which are useful for so many different purposes, are made of them also. The sieves I find already made in the part of the cocoa tree from whence the foliage proceeds. From these same leaves they make, besides, the sails of ships. The kind of fibre which surrounds the nut is much preferable to oakum for caulking vessels; it rots less quickly, and swells in

imbibing water. They also make out of it twine, cables, and all sorts of cordage. In fine I must tell you, that the delicate oil which seasons many of our dishes, and which burns in my lamp, is got by squeezing the nut when fresh.'

"The traveller listened in astonishment, wondering how this poor Hindoo, having nothing but cocoa trees, was nevertheless furnished by them with all that was necessary for his subsistence. When he was getting ready to go, his host said to him,

"'I am going to write to a friend whom I have in the town. Will you do me the kindness to take charge of my message?'

"'Yes; is it still the cocoa tree which furnishes you with what you want?'

"'Exactly,' replied the Indian; 'with the sawdust of the branches I have made this ink, and with the leaves this parchment; formerly it was always made use of for records and remarkable deeds.'

"I shall add myself, children," continued Mr. Beaumont, "that the cocoa tree produces fruit two or three times in a year. Admire, now, the wisdom and goodness of the Creator, who by means of one single tree furnishes man with all that is necessary for his common convenience. The native of the Indies finds in his cocoa tree what Europeans can only procure from many different sources."

"Yes, yes, father," exclaimed Louisa; "it is in-

deed an excellent and most useful tree. How good is God to give it to the people of the Indies! A cocoa tree, and they want nothing else; it is their all."

Mrs. Beaumont. 'Tis true, Louisa, they are sure of wanting for nothing. We are now well instructed in the advantages of the cocoa tree; but if we should make a religious application of it, would we not make our evening doubly useful?

Mr. Beaumont. Certainly; and it is to that point I wish to come. In regard to us, of whom does this cocoa tree present an emblem,—that tree which, as you say, Louisa, may be called the all of the people of the Indies?

"Is it not an emblem of our blessed Saviour?" said Charles. "He is all in all to those who trust in him and love him."

Louisa. Yes, yes, Charles, you are right; I think I understand what you would say.

Mr. Beaumont. See how this comparison holds good, my children; Jesus is our all. We find in Him all that is necessary to our soul. Now let us examine it a little in detail: the cocoa tree furnishes to the Hindoos the materials of which to construct their dwellings, and these are to them asylums where they are safe from the tempest and from the inclemencies of the seasons. Jesus is for those who trust in him, of whatsoever nation they be, a sure refuge from the wrath of God; and his wrath will

never reach those who are encircled in their Saviour's arms,—they are then in perfect safety. 'Tis under this similitude that the prophets represent him to us. But an asylum is not the only thing necessary, —men must also have sustenance to keep them alive; this the cocoa tree gives them in abundance. In the same way the soul finds in the Saviour all that can sustain its life. He has told us himself,— "I am come that my sheep may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly." He gives us the milk of his word, that we may grow thereby. He strengthens us by his power, sanctifies us by the oil of his Spirit, and clothes us with the garment of his righteousness.

Mrs. Beaumont. Well, my children, what reflections will the cocoa tree give rise to, when you think of that of which it is the emblem?

Louisa. Ah! mother, I shall remember how good and wise is God, to be able to give to man all that is necessary for the sustenance and pleasure of life; but I shall not end my thankfulness there. I shall reflect, besides, that Jesus is for his friends as a tree of life; and I shall pray this gracious Saviour to be my refuge. Then I shall rest in peace and safety.

Mr. Beaumont. It is that reflection I would have you draw, Louisa. And since I see that this evening has been agreeable to you, and that the remembrance of it will be, if it please God, useful to your

souls, we will spend some other in the same way, when my engagements will allow of it. Now, it is time to retire, as we have gone beyond our usual hour. I see that little Julia is fast asleep, and the best place for her is a snug little bed.

Charles and Louisa thanked their father for the pleasure he had given them, and which he promised to renew for them another time. The evening was concluded by the reading of the word of God and by prayer; for Mr. and Mrs. Beaumont, convinced of the salutary influence as well as the duty of family worship, never omitted it. The children then went cheerfully to bed, in the happy peace of mind which the reflections of their pious parents had tended to inspire.

THE SNOW AND THE BIRDS.

"Do you see, Louisa," said Charles to his sister, "do you see these poor little sparrows? they are benumbed with cold, they look as if they were very hungry, and they cannot find much by scratching the snow."

Louisa came to the window, and saw indeed upon the terrace a very large number of sparrows seeking for food; but the snow which covered the earth prevented them from finding either seed or insects. Some of them came close up to the window to see if there was any thing to be had there.

"Poor birds," said Louisa, "you are very much to be pitied; you have not, like us, a constant supply of food, untouched by the bad weather. Mother," said she, "I should like very much to give them some crumbs of bread, but I am afraid that opening the window will drive them away."

Mrs. Beaumont. They will take themselves away at the noise that you make, but will afterwards come back, as hunger makes them tame.

Charles opened the window as softly as was possible. His sister and himself threw out upon the ledge some crumbs of bread. They then withdrew, and had the satisfaction of seeing that the little birds came up merrily to eat the meal that had been prepared for them.

"Mother," said Louisa, "it is the snow which covers the ground at this season that deprives these little birds of their needful food. I do not wish to complain of the snow. I remember the remarks I made upon the rain, which were so displeasing to you; I should like you, therefore, very much to tell me of what service is the snow."

Mrs. Beaumont. I am delighted, my child, to find that my observations were not lost upon you; and I will tell you, to satisfy your curiosity, that the snow which children generally love, because they can amuse themselves with making snow-balls out of it, is of real use. It protects the ground and the grass, which experiences such sharp frosts that if it were not for this protection it would die. It has the same effect as the mats which you have seen the gardener put over young plants which are easily injured by the frost. As fast as the snow melts, the water which gently penetrates the earth is an excellent fertilizer, and it has been noticed that the harvests are best in those years in which there has been the most abundant falls of snow. The snow, in melting,

supplies the springs and the rivers, and produces also a grateful coolness to compensate in some measure for the effects of the heat of summer. You see, children, that the wisdom and goodness of the Creator are conspicuous in every object which presents itself to our notice. We must have cold in winter, and our heavenly Father has taken care to clothe the earth with a covering which preserves it, and which becomes afterwards a valuable fertilizer.

"I did not think," said Charles, "that the snow was of such use as it certainly is to us; but I am still a little distressed about these poor birds."

Mrs. Beaumont. I can, perhaps, furnish you with some consolation on their account. Look what a good meal they are making at this moment. See, children, how happy they are!

Louisa. Could we not let them share our meals every day, mother, until the fine weather returns, which will enable them to find their ordinary food?

Mrs. Beaumont. Certainly, and for that purpose I will furnish you with seed which you may give them after your own meals. I am sure that this employment will make pass very agreeably the half hour of recess which you have at that time. Now I will tell you how these birds, although they find it much more difficult to obtain their food in the winter season, are nevertheless not left entirely destitute. Besides the kinds of birds which migrate to

milder climates, there are others that pass the winter in a sort of lethargy, packed close against each other, under cover. Others again, with which we are more particularly concerned at this moment, live near dwellings, where they always find some support. Do you recollect the words of our Saviour, "Behold the fowls of the air, for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them." What a touching thought, children, and how much ought we to be struck with it at this moment, when we are going to relate some of the particulars of the care of our heavenly Father for these tender little ones. But let us not stop here; let us follow the remarks of our Saviour, who adds, "Are ye not much better than they?" Charles, what does he mean to tell us in these words?

Charles. That he takes still more care of us than he does of the birds.

Mrs. Beaumont. Yes; and that we ought to intrust ourselves entirely to this fatherly goodness; having the firm confidence that He will never leave us, but will bless our labour and our cares. But the hour of recess is past, we must resume our employments. Louisa, continue your sewing; and you, Charles, apply yourself to your lesson again, that your father may find it finished at his return.

In the evening, when the family were around the fire, the children were eager to tell their father of the

meal they had given to the birds, and the instruction that their mother had drawn from it.

"Well, my children," said Mr. Beaumont, "since the affairs of this afternoon have put us in the way of birds, let us occupy ourselves with that subject this evening. It is a very interesting one, and there is enough to talk about for more than one evening, so that I must make some choice in such an extensive subject. Your mother has told you as to their fate in winter with regard to food. I will now show you how God has no less benevolently provided for their clothing."

"Ah! father," said Louisa, "I shall be very glad to know something on that head; for just now, the idea struck me, that such delicate little creatures were as much in danger of dying by cold as by hunger."

Mr. Beaumont. You have remarked the plumage of birds, which is their most striking characteristic; and distinguishes them from all other kinds of animals. You know that these feathers form wings with which they fly, and a covering which envelops them; but what you do not know, is that these feathers are furnished, next the body, with a soft and warm down, which effectually protects the bird from cold; the beards of the large feathers are hooked into each other a little like tiles; an oily matter, spread on the outside, causes the rain to run off without

penetrating, but as the bird would become exposed as soon as this oil was exhausted, God has taken care to furnish a reservoir to supply it. There is a gland upon the rump of the bird, and when they feel their feathers to be out of order, they press it with their beak, and make this kind of thick liquor issue, with which they moisten their feathers by passing their beak backwards and forwards.

"Oh! father," exclaimed Louisa, "I have often seen them at this, especially in rainy weather, but I always thought that it was only for their amusement."

"Aquatic birds," continued their father, "being designed to be often in the water, are provided much more abundantly with this oil, and have, besides, much more down. All the different kinds of birds have also differences of formation suited to the places where they are designed to live and to their food. Thus the water birds, of which I have spoken to you, are web-footed, that is, their toes are united by a membrane which serves them for a fin, or an oar to move themselves about. Those designed to seek their food at the bottom of the water, in marshes or brooks, are mounted on high legs, and have a long beak upon a neck sufficiently lengthened to rake into the mud and get insects, as the heron. Carnivorous birds have sufficient strength to carry off their prey, and a crooked and edged beak, so as to be able to

tear it, as the eagle and the vulture; the beak of those who feed upon seed is differently arranged; the birds of warm countries, who have to break the hard shells of certain fruits, have a short and strong beak, fitted peculiarly to that purpose. You see that concerning this kind of animals alone, there is a crowd of interesting remarks to make, and an inexhaustible source of admiration at the perfect wisdom of the Creator."

Mr. Beaumont rose and went into his library for a book of engravings which he placed upon the table.

"I wish, children, to speak of some particular kinds of birds, as the different species are infinitely numerous. I will take the two extremes, and will speak to you of the ostrich, which is the largest bird of all, and of the humming bird, which is the smallest. Look at this engraving."

"Ah, father," said Julia, stretching out her little hand, "here is the ostrich."

Louisa. See how well Julia recollects it. She has seen it upon her picture alphabet, and has not forgotten it. Amuse yourself by looking at it, sister, and listen to father.

Mr. Beaumont. Indeed the ostrich is easy to recognise. Its small head, its long neck, its high legs; destitute of feathers up to the very top; all these form characters which strike even a child. Its length, from the end of its beak to that of its big toe, is

from seven and a half to nine feet, which may give you an idea of its size. Its wings are too small in proportion to its size to enable it to fly, but they are of service to hasten its speed. When the wind is favourable, it unfolds them like little sails. Vegetables form the principal food of the ostrich, and its voracity is such, that it eats all that is presented to it; doubtless it is this which has given rise to the proverbial expression, to describe a man who can eat almost any thing, "he has the stomach of an ostrich."

These birds are very common in the deserts of Africa and Ethiopia. An ostrich-hunt is one of the greatest pleasures of the chiefs of those countries. They go in pursuit of them mounted on Arab horses, and have dogs who stop the ostrich in its flight, otherwise they could never come up with them. They kill them immediately, with blows, in order to preserve their feathers, which are spoiled if any blood is shed on them. The feathers most valued are those which are taken from living birds which the inhabitants of Libya catch and rear. These feathers are very much sought after. Those which grow at the bottom of the neck, or on the back and on the rump, are black upon the male and brown upon the female, the others are gray or whitish. They serve to ornament the hats, the canopies, and the persons of the rich or great. Those of the male are much pre-

THE OSTRICH.

ferred, because they can be whitened and can be dyed all sorts of colours. Attempts have been made to use the ostrich like the horse. A naturalist relates that he has seen quite a young one run with extreme swiftness, carrying two natives on its back. But the animal seems not capable of being rendered obedient to man for such purposes.

Very large ostrich eggs are employed for making vases. The solidity of the shell becomes so great in the course of time, that it can be engraved. They resemble ivory a little yellow. The ostrich is gifted with very little sense, and you will not find in the female bird that interesting solicitude which some birds have for their young, even while in the egg.

Mrs. Beaumont. Yes, that is what God himself teaches us in the book of Job. "Gavest thou wings and feathers unto the ostrich? which leaveth her eggs in the earth, and warmeth them in the dust, and forgetteth that the foot may crush them, or that the wild beast may break them. She is hardened against her young ones, as though they were not hers; her labour is in vain without fear; because God hath deprived her of wisdom, neither hath he imparted to her understanding. What time she lifteth up herself on high, she scorneth the horse and his rider."*

Charles. If it is so, father, how is it that the

* Job xxxix. 13—19.

ostrich is found in such large numbers. How can they escape destruction?

Mr. Beaumont. Your inquiry is natural, Charles, but He who has said, "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will not I forget thee;"* He, I say, extends his fatherly care not only over the children of men, but also over the brute creation; and if the ostrich seems to be destitute of that feeling of tenderness which other birds have for their young, God has put them in climates where the heat which the sun communicates to the sand, in which the ostriches deposit their eggs, is sufficiently great to hatch them. Those which inhabit colder climates take care to cover their eggs during the night. And in addition to this, they deposit their eggs many times during the year, twelve or fifteen at a time. You see, then, Charles, that the race of ostriches is in no danger of becoming extinct, or even of being diminished. All the works of the Creator are performed with wisdom, and he knows how to take care of all by infinitely various means.

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* Isa. xlix. 15.

Now, my children, let us pass to the humming bird, which is entirely different from the one of which we have been talking. In France it is called the fly-bird, which name it takes from its smallness; the whole length of one species of the humming-bird, including the beak and the tail, is often only an inch and a quarter. Here is a picture of it, although an imperfect one, as it is not coloured; for the beauty of this little bird consists in the brilliant colours with which it is clothed. The colour of topaz, ruby, in a word, of all the most brilliant precious stones, appear in its plumage. The Creator seems to have desired to relieve its extreme smallness by these brilliant colours; which, under an ordinary plumage, men would have been apt to despise. This little bird has besides very great vivacity, which makes it very pleasant. It flies with quickness from flower to flower, to nourish itself with the honeyed sugar which they enclose. It makes its

nest of very fine cotton, and on the outside it surrounds it with fragments of moss. It is often attached to a leaf of the orange or of the citron tree. They lay two eggs, of the size of a grain of coriander, which are of a grayish white. They are found in the Antilles and in Brazil. There are besides other kinds of humming birds, which differ in some points from these, but all of them are remarkable for their smallness and the beautiful colours of their feathers.

Louisa. Oh! the charming little thing! How I should like to have one! How I should like to have these beautiful feathers; so finely variegated.

Mr. Beaumont. As to having one, Louisa, that is a desire which cannot be satisfied, so you must think no more of it; but possibly I may take you to a cabinet of natural history, where you will see stuffed birds in good preservation, which will give a very good idea of the fine plumage of these birds. Until this opportunity presents itself, you must be contented with this engraving and with the explanations which I have given you.

Louisa. I am much obliged to you, my dear father, as they have been very interesting to me, I assure you. I am especially impressed by seeing that God uses all kinds of means for the preservation of his creatures.

Mrs. Beaumont. One cannot advance a step in the study of nature, without finding motives for admira-

tion and gratitude. May it please the Lord to make this study conduce to bring us nearer to him, and to increase his love in our hearts.

Bed-time having arrived, the children retired to repose, having first bidden their parents good-night, and being very well satisfied with the evening's occupation.

THE PAPER MANUFACTORY.

The good resolutions formed by the little Beaumonts were put in practice; and, as their parents were well satisfied with their behaviour and industry, they wished to procure for them, while the season would yet allow of it, the pleasure of a ride to an interesting place in the neighbourhood.

At the distance of six miles from the village of C——, there was a large paper manufactory. The owners lived there and superintended it themselves. They had often invited Mr. Beaumont to come and pass a day with them, and to bring his children to let them see the interesting details of the manufacture of paper.

This excursion was looked forward to with impatience, so that Charles and Louisa were very well satisfied, when they were told that they would probably go the next day, as it was desirable to take advantage of the fine weather, which was not likely to last much longer, the season being now well ad-

vanced. They wanted to engage Mr. Clement and his family to be of the party, but they could not; the cares of his sacred office claimed the attention of Mr. Clement for the day; his wife was also unable to leave home, so that none but Lydia accepted the invitation.

Lydia was well matured in her understanding, and was of service to her mother in her household, and in the education of her little brother and sister. Her mother eagerly seized the opportunity of giving her some innocent and useful diversion, to vary the scenes of her ordinarily quiet life. Young girls brought up in a frivolous way and familiar with the world, would have thought Lydia very unhappy, but she judged differently. Her time being constantly occupied, she had not a moment for uneasiness: and her occupations having always some useful end, she felt that contentment which the thought that we have done our duty and fulfilled the objects of our Creator inspires. Being always brought up with her parents, she was well instructed, and she also possessed some talents for pleasing, which, without being pushed to excess, served to amuse the family. She was simple-minded and pious, so that Mrs. Beaumont looked with satisfaction upon the opportunities which her daughter had of forming an intimacy with her, and sought on all occasions to bring them together. It was then agreed, that at eight

o'clock the following morning they would call for Lydia on their way to the paper manufactory.

The next day, at the appointed hour, they entered the carriage. Little Julia was taken to Mrs. Clements, to spend the day, which would afford her more amusement than to go to see a manufactory which she could not at all understand. They took in Lydia, and were soon fairly started on their way. The sun was bright and gave a cheerful appearance to the country, which was beginning to lose its foliage. Some trees still had a few yellow and red leaves, but the greatest number was entirely bare, notwithstanding the country was still beautiful. When they had sufficiently admired what was to be seen on the way, they turned their thoughts to what they were going to see at the end of it, and came to the conclusion that paper was a very useful thing; for, said Louisa, "if we had no paper, we should have no books; we could not write; we could learn nothing; add to which, we should be deprived of the pleasure of corresponding with our parents and friends. What a grand invention is paper! How much I am obliged to the inventor!"

Charles. I do not think we could name the inventor of paper. It seems to have been invented by little and little. Different materials have successively been made use of, until at last paper came to be manufactured in its present mode. I suppose

that in every age there has been some substance on which they wrote.

Mr. Beaumont. As soon as writing was invented, it became necessary to find some substance proper to receive the characters. At first, stones sufficiently soft to receive impressions, skins, articles of cloth, shells, wax tablets, the inner bark of trees and parchment were used, which latter you know to be a preparation of skin. At last the Egyptians made use of the papyrus plant, from whence the word paper is derived. Although, in fact, this is not now the material of our *paper*, we have retained the name.

The papyrus is a plant which grows in Egypt, in the stagnant waters which the Nile leaves after an inundation. This plant is of rather a pretty appearance, and bears a kind of hairy plume. It was of the strong stalks of this plant, that the Egyptians made their paper. With the help of a needle they divided the stalks into very thin layers. They then stretched them and moistened them with water. After this they put them to dry in the sun, laying them cross-wise in different ways. Then they put them in a press, and obtained a paper which cannot indeed compare with ours, but which has yet been of great use.

Louisa. What a singular way of making paper.

But, tell us, father, is it long since they have made paper of rags?

Mr. Beaumont. The exact time is not agreed upon, and it is difficult to fix it. Some say in 1470, others say that it was used as early as 1440. In China, the fabrication of paper was understood long before it was known among us; for that purpose they made use of certain plants or the bark of certain trees, which were reduced to a pulp by pounding and beating. To make paper of this pulp they employed very nearly the same methods that are now made use of in Europe.

Mrs. Beaumont. The Chinese, although they had anticipated us in many inventions, have remained stationary, not having brought any of their discoveries to perfection; and have been left far behind by Europeans. In the establishment where we are going, you will see them make paper by very ingenious machinery lately invented, by which, in the same space of time, many times as much paper is made as by the ancient method.

Charles. I should like very much to see both methods in operation.

Lydia. You can have that pleasure. One piece of machinery is put up in this establishment, and they intend soon to erect another; but they have kept a room where they make paper by means of a frame. These gentlemen have many reasons

for continuing the old method in operation, but one in particular, which does them great credit—it is, that they may not suddenly deprive a large number of workmen of all occupation; for the manufacture of paper by machinery employs much fewer hands than the other method.

Charles. I would like to be at the head of a manufactory, to make new discoveries, to be of great use to the industry of my country, and to surround myself with workmen whom I should render rich and happy.

Mr. Beaumont. Industry is an honourable virtue, but it has its difficulties, like all others. You would like to make your workmen *rich* and *happy;* content yourself with securing to them enough to place them above want. As to making them happy, you will only attain this by inspiring them with feelings of contentment, which they can only enjoy in trusting in God and in submission to his will.

Mrs. Beaumont. In this age, when the wonders of human industry have been pushed to an extraordinary and surprising extent, there is danger of imagining that this is every thing, and that men, far advanced in civilization and surrounded with all the advantages of modern discoveries, must necessarily become better, and that morality follows always in the train of education. There is no doubt that ignorance and prejudice are sources of vice; but

instruction alone, when separated from the knowledge of God, cannot make man better; it becomes, on the contrary, an instrument of wickedness in his polluted hands, although the means of the most precious good for those who have the fear of God. You recollect, children, the twenty-eighth chapter of the Book of Job, which we read not long ago, and with what force it is there said that all human industry cannot give the knowledge of God, which is the very best thing in the world, "Man cutteth out rivers among the rocks; he bindeth the floods from overflowing.—But where shall wisdom be found? and where is the place of understanding?—Man knoweth not the price thereof; neither is it found in the land of the living. It cannot be gotten for gold, neither shall silver be weighed for the price thereof.—Whence then cometh wisdom? and where is the place of understanding? Seeing it is hid from the eyes of all living. God understandeth the way thereof, and he knoweth the place thereof.—And unto man he saith, Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding."

Mr. Beaumont. The reflections of your mother are very just, and are confirmed by the constant experience of mankind. As to the development of industry, its influence on morality, and the proper direction to give to it, these are very grave ques-

tions, but we have no more time to discuss them, for I perceive the trees which surround the house of these gentlemen, and they live but a very short distance from the manufactory.

A grove of trees came in full sight, which in summer shaded the house entirely, but which were now nearly bare. The house was neat and regular; and if it did not indicate luxury, at any rate it bespoke comfort. At some distance from it was a large building, which had two rows of windows. Below this building flowed a brook which bounded on with white foam, and at last was confined in a canal where it continued its course more swiftly, watering the meadows and fields, and then flowed by the side of the road along which the Beaumont family were passing. They arrived soon at an avenue which was formed by a double row of beautiful Italian poplars, mixed with some willows. In a few minutes they came to the steps of the house, where they found their hosts waiting to receive them; and when they assured them that they were not fatigued, and that they would have more pleasure in walking about than in sitting down, they proposed a ramble in the garden, which partook of the character of the season, although some fall flowers were yet to be found, which, less delicate than the rest, were still alive, notwithstanding the cold weather which began to prevail.

The children were impatient to see the paper manufactory. They had often desired to go there, as we have before said; but their hosts wanted them to take some rest and refreshment; for, said they, "it will require some time to see every thing in detail, and you must take something first." Mrs. Beaumont thanked the gentlemen for their kindness: the children would have preferred to go at once to the manufactory, though when they saw on the table a feast of good things, their appetite, excited by the journey, re-asserted its strength, and they needed no pressing to take their part in the repast.

As soon as they had finished, they bent their steps towards the manufactory, the approach to which was by a gravel walk, bordered on each side by a beautiful rivulet. They asked to see every thing, from the beginning to the end, and to stay long enough in each place to comprehend every thing. Mr. Beaumont, fearing to trespass on the kindness of the superintendent, begged him to let them go alone, thinking that he would be able to give his children the requisite explanations.

The superintendent assured them that he was entirely unoccupied at the time, and would not leave them; and made them promise to be under no restraint, but to ask him as many questions as they pleased.

"Since you want to see every thing," said he,

"come in this room, where the rags are sorted. You may have seen, in town, women who go from house to house, asking people if they have any old rags to sell. They buy what are thought fit to throw away, and even pick up what is found in the gutters. Then they go about and gather them, with a large hook, in alleys and heaps of filth, and when they have collected a sufficient number, no matter how foul and dirty they are, they sell them to those who carry on this trade in wholesale, who make them up into bales and send them to us in carts. You can see any number of these carts in the court. They will soon unload them, and their contents will be carried into the room where we are going.

Louisa. Is it possible that out of these horribly dirty rags they make such fine paper?

"Yes," said Mr. Beaumont, "human industry contrives to draw profit from every thing."

They came into a room where the rags were in heaps and where women were employed in sorting them, that the coarse and fine might not remain mixed up together. The first served to make gray paper, the latter, that of a beautiful white.

"Do you only use linen rags?" asked Mr. Beaumont.

Superintendent. For some kinds of paper we make use of all kinds of stuff, but for white paper, we use white rags, either of linen or cotton. It must be

observed that the linen rags compose the greater part; but a small mixture of cotton rags, far from spoiling the paper, renders it finer. In the East they made paper of cotton, even before it had been woven. As at this time cotton was very scarce and dear in France, it could not be made use of for this purpose, and the idea was formed of substituting for it old worn-out scraps of linen which had been used. This succeeded perfectly, and this material, which was used only from necessity, produced paper better and more beautiful than that which had been made before that time.

Lydia (*to Louisa.*) What a dust fills this room as they pick out and shake the rags! It almost prevents my breathing freely. And what a strong and disagreeable smell is given out by these rags which they are moving. Poor women! how I pity them, obliged as they are to pursue an employment which I am sure must have a bad influence upon their health.

Louisa. See! Lydia, see this woman, who, while she is sifting the rags, is rocking a little baby; there it is in a wooden cradle; let us look at it. Oh! how pale the poor little creature is! It has a look of pain. It ought not to remain here. I am sure this atmosphere will injure it.

The Woman. Ah! Miss, I know very well that this air is not the thing for my child, who is at this

moment suffering under a fever; but what can I do? If I leave it at home, it will cry all day, because there is nobody to take care of it; and if I stay with it, I shall be making nothing, and we will not have a cent to buy bread with; we have nothing but the small pittance which I earn here.

Lydia. She is right. You have no idea, Louisa, of all that these poor people are obliged to endure. To obtain the bare necessaries of life claims their first attention; and as to comforts, they know of them only by what they see or hear away from home. Ought not such a sight as this to lead us to thank God for the comfortable circumstances in which he has placed us? And if we only reflect on this sight, we shall no more complain, as we often are in the habit of doing, that we had not some superfluity.

Louisa. Yes, but ought not this child to be taken from this poisonous atmosphere, which in its present feverish state may be its death?

Lydia. You are right, Louisa; we must not content ourselves with drawing reflections from the misfortunes which we witness, without endeavouring also to alleviate them. I will get this woman to come next Saturday to breakfast at C——, and your mother or mine will try to get her some employment more healthy, both for herself and her child.

Lydia and Louisa communicated their intentions

to the poor woman, who thanked them much, and promised to go after them the following Saturday, which was easy for her, as she lived halfway on the road to C——.

Charles. Come now and see what they do with the rags after thy are sorted. Look at this large square, wooden hopper. The rags are thrown in there and they fall in a vat full of water, which is placed in the room below this.

Superintendent. The rags remain twenty-four hours in this vat, from whence they are drawn out and piled up in a heap, where they let them ferment, which renders them more pliable and facilitates the following operations. You will do well only to look in at this room from the threshold of the door, for there is nothing curious to see, and the smell of the rags is almost insupportable to those who are not used to it.

Mrs. Beaumont. Yes, let us only give a single glance and hasten to look at the other operations.

Superintendent. Let us ascend the staircase opposite, and we will find ourselves in the room where are the engines or large troughs, in which the rags are ground small. Tread with caution, as there is water everywhere about. You had better come near me, for the machines make such a noise, that at a little distance you cannot understand me.

When the rags have fermented, they are carried

to this large stone reservoir, called the cleaner; it is full of water. A heavy cylinder, armed with a kind of cutters, large at the base and tapering upwards, is put in motion by the water; it meets other cutters placed obliquely upon a piece of wood strongly fastened to the reservoir, and by a rapid and continual rotation of the cylinder, the rags are mashed and ground between these two sets of blades or cutters, as between scissors imperfectly sharpened. At the same time the machine is so constructed that clean water is constantly running in and the dirty water running out, so that in a little time the dirty rags are seen to have been transformed into a comparatively clean, soft, pulpy substance. In this state they are removed to another large vat to be bleached. Here they put chlorine upon the pulp, to whiten it still more. To prevent any injury from the chlorine, the pulp is again washed thoroughly in water. Finally, they pass it into a third vat, called the refiner, which reduces it to a paste so fine and so white that it would be impossible to recognise in it those filthy rags which we saw in the first room. These operations in preparing the paste are common to both methods of paper manufacture, but as soon as the paste is made, the processes are entirely different. What shall we visit now? We can let you see both methods in operation.

Mrs. Beaumont. Since you are so kind as to offer

to let us see every thing, perhaps we had better follow the order of time, and begin at the old method.

Superintendent. You are right, madam. Well, let us pass into this room and see. There is the pulp contained in tubs and ready to be used. It is essential that it should be exactly right, neither too thin nor too thick, and of this the workmen must judge. They make use of moulds in making paper. The mould, which is so formed as to give the sheet its breadth, length and thickness, is a wooden frame, closed on the inside by a succession of brass wires, which are well stretched and laid close against each other, and divided into different equal parts by as many brass wires, which are called *transversals.* Upon this frame wire, in two places, are the figures or marks, which we see when we hold up a sheet of hand-made paper to the light. These marks are impressed upon every sheet of paper. The form, which you see, is going to be plunged into that vat full of pulp, of which it will carry away as much as it can retain. The liquid part escapes by the intervals between the wires, as through a sieve. This matter, which was fluid an instant ago, has been disposed, by its very fluidity, to precipitate itself in a perfect level. It sinks down and becomes thick in the bottom of the frame. The sudden drying has made a sheet of paper of it, but still without con-

sistence. The workman, who dips the frame in the great tub, is called the dipper; he delivers the frame to the other workman, called the coucher; this last, turns the frame bottom upwards so that the new formed sheet falls on a piece of felt or some material of wool, spread out to receive it; and then he covers it with another piece of the same stuff, upon which the next sheet is to fall.

Lydia. With what rapidity they perform this operation! It is really difficult to follow their motions. See, already, what a large pile there is of sheets of paper.

Superintendent. Now they will put this pile of paper and felt into a press, in order to get out all the moisture which yet remains, and to give to the paper still more consistence. After that the stretcher will come and stretch these sheets upon a large square board, where the air will dry them. They are then put again into the press, and when taken out will be hung upon lines in an airy loft, to complete the operation of drying.

I will now say a word upon the sizing of paper, and afterwards hasten to show you the process of manufacturing by machinery. They keep shreds of leather and of parchment boiling during six hours. They then strain this gluey matter, and while it is still lukewarm they plunge into it the

sheets of paper, which they immediately afterwards subject to a heavy pressure, which forces the sizing to spread through all the pores of the paper, and thus entirely stop them. The object of this operation is to prevent the paper from absorbing moisture, which would otherwise happen, as you see in the coarse paper which does not undergo this operation. We will now go into the room where the machinery is in operation.

They went into the room pointed out by the superintendent, but saw nobody there; and at first the children thought that the work was stopped, perhaps on account of its being the dinner-hour of the workmen. But what was their astonishment, when a more attentive examination disclosed to them in the part of the room where they were, large cisterns full of pulp, and at the other end of the room an enormous wooden wheel, on which even and very white paper was continually winding.

"Oh!" exclaimed Louisa; "'tis a real enchantment. The paper makes itself without any one taking any trouble about it."

The superintendent laughed, and said—

"It is true that at this moment there is not a single workman here, and that the paper is always made with the same rapidity; but it is not common for this room to be entirely deserted. We commonly have one or two workmen to see that the

paper is not torn, and one or two others who come from time to time to oil the wheels, in order that they may always move with the same ease. To see every thing minutely, get up with me upon these steps, which will lead you to a kind of little gallery on which are placed many large cisterns."

Charles. They are full of that paste which is used to make paper, and here, at the side, is a pump; what is the use of it?

Superintendent. To carry water into these cisterns, to give to the paste the requisite degree of liquidity.

Louisa. And these large pieces of iron which are moving, what are they for?

Superintendent. This large piece of iron perpendicular to the cistern, and to which are attached other horizontal pieces of iron, is kept in motion by the water, and is constantly shaking the paste, which keeps it always, and throughout the whole vat, at the same degree of thickness. Without this shaking all the paste would fall to the bottom of the cistern, and there would remain nothing above but the water. A pipe communicates from this cistern with the machine for making paper, which occupies the whole length of the room. This pipe conducts the pulp into a kind of zinc trough, from which it discharges itself, mixed with a large quantity of water, upon an endless metallic cloth.

Louisa. What is a metallic cloth?

Mrs. Beaumont. It is a cloth woven of very fine brass wires, but which you may well suppose are not so closely woven as threads of hemp or flax. The two ends of this cloth are fastened together, and thus form what they call an endless web, because, turning it incessantly it appears to have, like a circle, neither beginning nor end.

Superintendent. The horizontal motion which constantly and rapidly shakes this cloth, is given to it by a handle attached to that pump which is against the wall, on the other side. This agitation serves to make the water flow more rapidly, and to give to the pulp a level always uniform. The water which falls across the metallic cloth contains still a certain quantity of pulp. It is therefore received on the floor, and by means of the machinery, is raised again into the zinc pipe, which has, besides, the advantage of preventing the pulp from becoming too thick. This pulp, in passing over the cloth, acquires some considerable consistency. To hasten the drying of the paste, there are fixed three suction pumps. It is one of these pumps which makes the handle move to which I called your attention just now. By drawing in the air, these pumps form a current, which passes over the metallic cloth where the pulp is. If you look with a little attention, you will easily see the effect produced. At the place

where the current is, the mixture becomes, almost all at once, of the consistence of a paste, and of the thickness of a sheet of paper. You see that the paper (for now we may give it that name) passes over four cylinders. Let us examine them, in order to know their use. They are now covered with a piece of cloth, whose ends, like those of the metallic cloth, being sewed together, form likewise an endless cloth. In turning upon this cloth, the paper dries fast enough; but to make it dry entirely there are made, as you see, tin cylinders of very large diameter. They are filled in the interior with steam. This steam keeps the surface warm, and renders the paper entirely dry. Thence it passes through metal cylinders, that press it with great force. Then it is rolled upon this large wheel, which terminates the machine. It is now ready for writing, even to the sizing; for in place of putting it into the glue when the paper is finished, the glue is mixed with the pulp.

Charles. From whence comes the steam which fills these large cylinders?

Superintendent. From a boiler fixed in a side building. The steam is conducted by pipes into the cylinders.

Louisa. Here is the paper entirely dry, but it is not fine and even like that we use.

Superintendent. We do not send it out for the purpose of trade, in the state in which it leaves this

wheel. We begin by putting it on the table which fills this corner. The paper is folded of the size of which the sheets are intended to be made. They are fixed by means of a screw between the table and large rules, and with very large knives the paper is cut in a regular and even manner. Afterwards these sheets are carried into the room into which we are now going to enter.

You see this vat which is in the middle. In this a part of the sheets are immersed for a moment, and afterwards arranged in piles, a wet and dry one alternately, and placed under a press. When it has remained there a suitable time, the women take the paper and change it, sheet by sheet. It is then put under a press again, and again drawn out, and arranged in packages of twenty quires, containing each twenty-four sheets. These packages are called reams, and it is in this manner that it is exposed to sale. It is then smooth and glossy, and much finer looking than when it was on the wheel of the machine.

Now you have seen all the process of the manufacture, and you will be able to judge for yourselves what an advantage this machinery has over the hand worker, since with the same number of workmen three or four times the quantity of paper can be made in the same time; and in consequence its price is lessened in the same proportion.

Mr. Beaumont, in the name of his family, thanked

the superintendent for the kindness with which he had explained every thing to them. They went into the parlour to rest a while, and wait till the carriage was ready. Then they took leave, repeating their thanks. All the way home, they talked of what they had seen. They asked for details and explanations from their father and mother, who advised their children to write down an account of what they had seen.

"For," said Mr. Beaumont, "it is the only way to draw any lasting profit from what one sees. You think you understand a thing quite well, but after a while it is all forgotten, while, in order to write, you must have exact ideas. Besides, you preserve, by this means, an account which you may afterwards have occasion to consult. Nothing so forms the mind as to be able to give an exact account of what you have seen, and to be able to express it so as to convey your ideas to others."

The wonderful changes which have been accomplished in the condition of the world by the discovery of great principles in science, or by the invention of useful machines, such as the steam-engine and the telegraph, are worthy of our study. The application of steam to produce motion of every kind, and especially upon the railway and the ocean; the telegraph which enables us to speak to each other through the space of hundreds of miles, as if

we were neighbours, whereby the nations of the earth are brought so near to each other; and the various contrivances to save human and brute labour, and to accomplish in a short time and at little expense what used to require a long time and a large expense, have had a wonderful influence upon the customs of society and upon the interests of men, both in this world and in that which is to come.

We should be very thankful that these advantages for doing good to each other and to the world around us are so many and so great; and it should be our constant purpose to make all writing and printing, and reading and travelling, as well as thinking, talking and working, the means of increasing human happiness and glorifying God.

Charles and Louisa felt that their father was right in advising them to put down on paper what they could recollect of the sights of the day, and promised to try what they could do, as soon as they had time after they returned. Delays in such cases are likely to end in neglect. They expressed a wish that their father would revise and correct their work, which he cheerfully consented to do.

When they had arrived at the village, they stopped at Mr. Clement's to put down Lydia and take in little Julia, who was eager to tell her parents how much she had been amused, and that she had been very good.

Charles and Louisa, full of the project of writing an account of what they had seen, spent the evening in questioning each other, and in taking notes, anticipating that they would take the work in hand the next day, and do it as well as they could.

THE GREAT CARTHUSIAN MONASTERY.

"HERE we are, my dear children," said Mrs. Beaumont, "comfortable in the corner of the fireplace, and although the weather is not yet cold, still it is so damp that it is pleasant to get near the fire. Are you disposed to do some reading?"

Charles. Very much so, indeed, mother; but we had better not undertake it, as the Clements are coming here to pass the evening with us, for I saw Henry just now, and he told me so.

Mrs. Beaumont. Well, then, we will take our work, and wait for our friends. What are you looking at, Julia?

Julia. At these beautiful pictures. Look at this great building, so very fine, but without any windows. It is so queer! It has not even a door. How can anybody get into it?

Charles. It is I who lent her this book, and I will explain it to her. It is about the seven wonders of the world, and this, which you see, is the tomb of

Mausolus, husband of Queen Artemisia. Don't you see her there weeping?

Julia. Poor Artemisia, she must grieve very much. How I pity her!

At this moment Mr. and Mrs. Clement, with Henry and Lydia, came in. Scarcely were they seated, when Julia, eager to show her pretty book, approached them and said,

"Here is the book of the Wonders of the World. It is so pretty! Here is one of them. Have you ever seen the wonders of the world? I should like very much, really, to see them. I should indeed."

Mr. Clement. My dear, I have seen as well as you the wonders of the world in drawings, and I have read descriptions of them in books of history, but I have never seen the originals. It is many ages since they have ceased to exist, except the pyramids of Egypt, which are still standing; but I have been forced to be satisfied with descriptions of them, as well as of the others, never having visited Egypt.

Lydia. But you have often told us of the wonders of Dauphiny, which are seven in number, like the wonders of the world.

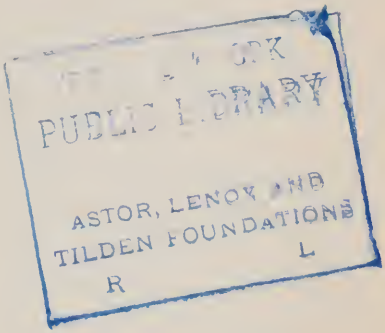
Mr. Clement. Yes, I lived for a long time in that very interesting country, and have had time to visit all its curiosities. There are seven things which the inhabitants used to think marvellous. Now that

men are more enlightened, these superstitions are no longer entertained. No one, in visiting them, now expects to find any thing out of the common course of nature; but the country is resorted to on account of its enchanting scenery and picturesque views.

Louisa. If I might venture, Mr. Clement, I would beg you to let us see these wonders. I am very fond of making these journeys without stirring a step. They are performed without fatigue or danger, and are a source of both profit and pleasure.

Charles. I also am fond of this kind of travelling, but I am still fonder of that which is real. It is a delightful thing to climb mountains, to penetrate into grottoes, and to increase one's collection of minerals and of dried flowers. Oh! I hope that one of these days I shall have the pleasure of travelling; but, in the mean time I shall be delighted to listen to the narrative with which Mr. Clement is going to favour us.

Mr. Clement. If that will contribute towards making the evening pass pleasantly, I am all in readiness to collect my remembrances and to give you the satisfaction; but I must tell you that there is, in Dauphiny, an object which is not ranked among the list of its wonders, and which yet is, to me, the most interesting object to visit. It is the great Carthusian Monastery, and if it suits you, it is of this that I will speak to you.



H. Daere del.

THE CARTHUSIAN MONASTERY. *Page 63.*

P. S. Duval Lith. Ph

Mrs. Beaumont. I am delighted with your selection, sir; and shall be much pleased to become acquainted with the details of a place of which I have often heard, and which one must go a great distance to visit.

Charles. I shall listen with great pleasure also; but I love wonders, and shall not give up without reluctance an account of those of Dauphiny.

Mr. Beaumont. This is not the last evening, I hope, that we will spend together; and some other time, I am sure Mr. Clement will be willing to gratify your taste for the wonderful.

Mr. Clement. You will always find me ready, my friends; but let us occupy ourselves at present with the great Carthusian Monastery.

I was very anxious to become acquainted with this spot, celebrated alike for its situation and its inhabitants. It was then with a lively pleasure that I set out from Grenoble at daybreak, on a fine morning in July. I took the Voreppe road, which goes through a delicious valley. On the right are very high mountains covered with verdure and crowned with rocks. On the left, a plain of great extent, watered by the Isere. This plain presents an extremely smiling appearance; vines supported upon trees, poplars and walnuts, afford a shade. You behold fields of grain and flax; every thing shows fertility and richness. The Creator has been lavisb

of his benefits in this highly favoured spot. All is smiling and forms a striking contrast with the scenes that you meet when you have penetrated into the mountain.

Arriving at Voreppe, we quitted the high road to Lyons, and had a long and rugged ascent to climb. When this was passed, we had no more rising ground until we reached Saint Laurent du Pont. The walnuts and the fine chestnut trees, the meadows, the woods, the villages and country seats scattered here and there, present beautiful views, varying at every moment: but you notice them but little, as you are eager to arrive at the monastery, and anticipating what you are to see there. At Saint Laurent du Pont we left our carriages and procured mules. These animals are accustomed to this journey, and, as you are aware, are also very sure-footed, and carry you over the worst roads without the least danger. Nevertheless, I would recommend to those who have good legs, to intrust the mules with their baggage only. There is nothing like going on foot. You are then your own master. You can stop when you choose, and go on when you choose. If a by-path strikes you pleasantly, you can take it; or if you see a flower that you like, you can turn out of your way to pluck it. If a remarkably striking landscape attracts your attention, you can admire it, without interruption from a guide who is

impatient, or a champing horse who would force you to pass rapidly on, without having seen half as much as you would.

Charles. Yes, it is thus that I should like to travel,—on foot and free as air. We must take a trip, father. You know that we have often spoken of it.

Louisa. I should like to travel on foot too. Could I not be of the party also? You know that I am a good walker.

Mr. Beaumont. It would be difficult for a woman to travel any distance in this way; but for jaunts, or little trips I advise you by all means to go on foot as much as possible. Besides the pleasure one has in seeing more of the country, this exercise is very strengthening and good for the health.

Mr. Clement. There is, moreover, a moral advantage in travelling, and in travelling in every manner. You learn to become courageous; not to be scared at every little thing. You learn also how to do without a thousand little conveniences which you have been accustomed to look upon as indispensable. To accommodate yourself, for instance, to a bad meal, or to sleep in an uncomfortable bed.

Mr. Beaumont. It has happened to me to meet, in travelling, with some persons who were quite deficient in these qualities,—particularly females. They began to scream loudly at the least appearance of danger. They complained bitterly of heat and then

of cold, and could not bear the most trifling vexations. If they did not find in the hotels every thing that they wanted, they would fall into a fit of bad temper, and make everybody around them feel it, too.

Lydia. But there is some injustice in judging all by those that you have seen. They are not all alike surely.

Mr. Beaumont. No, certainly not. I have travelled with many ladies who were most agreeable companions. They not only put up cheerfully with the fatigue and inconvenience inseparable from travelling, but even made us forget our own vexations in their pleasant society.

Mrs. Beaumont. It is a good plan, even from infancy and youth, to accustom oneself to courage and to support some privations. Later in life we shall have more difficulty in acquiring the habit, and shall find ourselves unable to attain it but by an exertion of mind of which few persons are capable. My dear children, you will find it a good plan not to give way to those little fears and that extreme sensitiveness which render people so ridiculous. Some women have so little sense as to imagine that it makes them interesting; and having nothing to think of but themselves, they sometimes affect fears which they really do not feel. In travelling, it is true we are liable to more perils than when we remain quietly at home; but when we find ourselves exposed to a

real danger, it is not cries nor fears that can ward it off, but composure; and this can only arise from confidence in God, under whose protection we ought to place ourselves in a special manner when we are travelling by land or sea.

Louisa. I hope, my dear mother, that I shall not be among the number of the timid ones. I have much progress to make, but I think I have made some already.

Mr. Beaumont. Yes, yes, I am perfectly satisfied you have. But if we keep on talking, Mr. Clement will not have time to finish his narrative; so let us listen.

Mr. Clement. We will suppose that during your conversation all the arrangements have been made at St. Laurent, and behold me on my journey, staff in hand. The aspect of the country had entirely changed. The beech and the fir tree now abounded, and the walnut and chestnut soon disappeared entirely. Some distance in front of us, lofty mountains bounded the horizon: no passage could be seen, and it appeared impossible to go on any further. Just at the foot of these mountains, on the left of the road and on the edge of the torrent, the hamlet of Fourvoirie is situated, where are the forges whose noise echoes through all the rocks around. This little hamlet would attract attention, if it were not entirely absorbed by the entrance to what is called the desert,

which presents itself suddenly to you. The mountain opens and gives passage to a torrent which bounds in white foam over the rocks. Between the torrent and the mountain, there is a road, just wide enough for two mules; across this narrow pass is built a gate; when this is shut, all communication is cut off, there being no other practicable road. Scarcely have you passed this threshold, when you find yourself between two ramparts of rocks, whose summits, covered with tall firs, seem to reach the clouds! To give a just idea of this position, and of the feelings it inspires, would be impossible. I advanced slowly along the bank of the Guiersmort, which having become tranquil, disclosed to me a sheet of clear water, in which were reflected the fir tree and the mountains and the beautiful blue sky, which I could not see in any other way, except by looking directly upward; so entirely was I shut up between the rocks, which even in some places cover the road, almost like an arched roof.

I went along slowly, being desirous to enjoy longer the contemplation of this wild spot, and the feelings to which that contemplation gave rise within me. It seemed to me that in the gate of the desert I had put myself at a vast distance from the rest of the world and drawn nearer the Creator. No human sound saluted my ear; all that was earthly appeared to withdraw and vanish, and the glory and might of

the All-Powerful, showed themselves with more splendour; for there is indeed an awful mysterious power exhibited here, which strikes the imagination, and I am not surprised that such a retreat should be the choice of men who were desirous of perfect seclusion. In some places the road is bounded by a precipice, at the base of which flows the torrent. Gigantic fir trees rise from this depth so high as to shade the road. I crossed the torrent by a bridge, and then had the precipice on my right instead of my left. In looking above me, I perceived the rocks, which elevated themselves in every direction, and were terminated by pinnacles of every form, on which the fir trees formed, as it were, a trimming of lace. Here the road grew still narrower, and all at once an obelisk of rock came in sight, which rose like a giant, as if to guard the passage. I went under an arch that was once closed by a gate, of which there remains nothing at present but the masonry. A porter formerly lived there: now it is desert, like the rest. I love this silence and perfect solitude. Such a profound calm is good both for soul and body. We seem separated from the earth, lifted, as it were, above it, and enjoying a more intimate intercourse with God.

A building, surmounted by a belfry, presented itself to my sight. I hastened my steps, supposing it to be the convent. I approached a guide and

questioned him; but it was only a house where the sick friars were accommodated. This building was formerly much more considerable, but part of it has fallen to ruin, and has never been repaired. Here the Fathers had once their vegetable gardens. As there was yet a long distance to be gone over before reaching the convent, I sat down to recruit my strength. I was upon the brink of the torrent. The fir trees still formed an arch over my head, impenetrable to the most powerful rays of the sun. I did not stop long however, as I was eager to get to my journey's end. At last, at the turn of a dark avenue of firs, was the convent, which could not be seen until close upon it. Behold then the steeples with their slender spires; the roof of slate, whose summits, covered with tin, shine with still greater lustre in the rays of the sun, from the contrast with the gloomy tint of the slate. As to the rest, there is no order nor regularity in this immense building, which seemed intended to imitate the wildness of the mountains that surround it. There is, nevertheless, some regularity in the front, which cannot be seen from this side. We approached the convent, which in its extent resembles a small hamlet. This appears like the dwelling of man, but no voice is heard, nor are any signs of life seen—all is silent as the grave, and the building appears to be but an immense tomb. In vain do you look for inhabitants. No one is to

be seen. All is closed, and you must seek a shelter elsewhere. You direct your steps towards a small building, of but little pretensions, near by. There you can rest, but this also is now closed. You must wait to gain admittance. At last a lay brother arrives. He opens the door and introduces you into a large low room, where even in the hottest weather you would be glad to find a fire.

Ah! I perceive a friar, who is coming toward us. He has his head entirely shaved and a long beard. He is clothed with a garment of white wool. A cowl of the same material hangs down behind, and he can, when he wishes, cover his bald head with it. This cowl comes over on the front, where it is terminated by a large band, which descends to the skirt of his robe. Here at last are human beings. You are filled with joy; you were before oppressed at the sight of this immense habitation, so completely desolate. The Carthusian inquires with interest as to your wishes, and offers his kind assistance. It is the friar Jean Maria. His reputation has spread far and wide. The business of receiving travellers is committed to him by the General of the Order, and he discharges it very well; so that in all the accounts of travels to the great monastery, no one fails to make mention of him, and particularly his animated figure and lively and piercing eyes. As for myself, I must say that I was touched with the cordial man-

ner with which he received me and bade me adieu, although knowing very well that I was a Protestant minister.

Charles. Did you not see any other of the monks but this one?

Mr. Clement. Yes, I saw others, but I will finish my description of the building before entering into any details of its inhabitants.

The next morning we arose early, as we wished to see every thing, and first to visit the chapel of St. Bruno. We penetrated through a wood of firs and followed a mountainous path over stones and rocks. After at most three-quarters of an hour of travel (for we stopped often to gather the flowers in which these woods abound) we arrived at the chapel of the Virgin. Situated on the right of the road, opposite to this, there is a small house where a fire is made when the season makes it necessary. This chapel is very small, but filled to overflowing with ornaments. The walls and the ceiling are covered with gilded hearts on which are inscribed the praises of the Virgin: these are litanies. I stopped but a little while there; for it always pains and offends me to see the creature put in the place of the Creator as an object of worship. In coming out of this chapel, you find a little glade, where, as the absence of fir trees favours the growth of flowers, they beautify the meadow in great abundance. We were not long in coming to

the chapel of St. Bruno. I stood still, struck with its singular and picturesque situation. A very elevated rock serves as a pedestal for it. The front is above this rock, and is entirely inaccessible. The chapel can only be reached by a side-door, to which a staircase conducts, which is hewn in the rock. Fir trees surround this chapel; and at the base of the rock which supports it, there is an abundant spring of pure and ice-cold water. Nothing can be more calm and solitary than this situation. The mountains enclose it on every side, and the fir trees are high, so that there is but little horizon. It was said to have been here that St. Bruno stationed himself with his six companions, when he founded the Order of the Carthusians. It was only at a later date, when the friars became more numerous, that a convent was built at the place where it is now situated.

If I were going to describe to you all the places that we visited, I should end by fatiguing you. You cannot get tired of these solitudes where perfect calm, and the presence of God are felt in such a delightful manner; but to describe them would only be a work of endless repetition, and tiresome to the listeners. I will only tell you of the dairy, where a great number of cows are kept, which you see feeding without a keeper, in these rich meadows. Above the dairy, you arrive at an opening between two mountains, disclosing a magnificent sight, which has

somewhat the effect of an optical delusion. On the extreme of the horizon you see the lake of Bourget in Savoy, whose beautiful blue waters merge into the sky. I will tell you, besides, of the fine meadows over which we passed in returning to the convent by another road than that which we took in going. These meadows are surrounded by fir trees, whose dark green makes a pleasing contrast with the light and soft green of the grass; and the grass itself is embellished with a thousand colours. We found there the lily of St. Bruno, whose delicacy and splendour made me exclaim—"Even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these!" We found also wild roses, so fresh and of such brilliant colours that those of the plain could not compare with them. Gentians, with blue bells supported upon a short stem; larger gentians, with yellow flowers, which, by their size, seemed to rule all the plants around, so that a fine collection could be made there to enrich one's herbal. We arrived again at the convent, fatigued, yet delighted with our expedition. It is on this side that the front shows itself, which is very small in proportion to the size of the building. To the right and left of the door of entrance are seen two niches, the one containing the statue of St. Bruno, and the other that of St. Hugo, Bishop of Grenoble.

The next day we resumed our journey by the side

of the Sappey. It is not equal in beauty to the other route, in my estimation. You are much sooner out of the desert, which, by this road, as by the other, presents a natural wall of rocks, and a gate which shuts out the only accessible spot on the brink of the torrent. What is much more remarkable is the magnificent view which presents itself a little while after having left the Sappey. In emerging from this narrow pass, the rich valley of Graisivoidon discloses itself in all its beauty. Nature is no longer stern and wild. Nothing more of a secluded desert is seen. The prospect is all smiling and fertile. It is a country thickly inhabited, repaying, as it does, the labour of the cultivator with large interest. Once in this valley, you soon arrive at Grenoble.

Charles. Is this convent very ancient?

Mr. Clement. It was in the year 1084 that St. Bruno (as he is called) and six of his friends who were under his direction, established themselves in the desert of Chartreuse, the property of which was granted to them by St. Hugo, Bishop of Grenoble, and by other persons who owned a part of this desert. It is from thence that the name Chartreuse comes, and the convent was called the "Grande Chartreuse," because it was there that the General of the Order resided, whose jurisdiction extended over all the monasteries of the Order which have been founded since all over Europe. The convent itself is not as

old as 1084. St. Bruno built little cottages on the spot where the chapel stands, which now bears his name. These rude buildings were not sufficient for winter. A wooden edifice was constructed, which forty-nine years afterwards was destroyed by an avalanche. Nothing remained but the church, replaced at present by the chapel of the Virgin; and a stone building was erected on the present site of the convent; but not the same which exists at present. It has been burnt eight times. That which is now to be seen was built in 1676. During the Revolution it was abandoned and laid waste; since that time it has been repaired and is in a very good condition.

Charles. Will you be so kind, now that you have finished your description of the convent, to tell us something of the manner of life of the friars, which quite excites my curiosity.

Mr. Clement. As you enter, the first object you meet are the porter's lodge and the laboratory. Then comes a large court in which are two circular basins, supplied with water from the spring of St. Bruno, which is brought into the convent in a pipe. It is at the foot of this court that the real front of the convent appears, built with regularity and with strength, but about which there is nothing remarkable. What you see with the greatest surprise in the interior of this vast edifice is a passage above four hundred and fifteen feet in length! It may be con-

sidered as the vestibule of the convent, because it forms a communication between the different parts of this edifice. When two persons are at the extremities of this passage, they appear to each other like mere children. There is a church, apartments for the General or Prior, and a library. Behind these buildings there is a large cloister, which forms a long square, lighted by one hundred and thirty windows; it is seven hundred and thirteen feet in length, by seventy-six in breadth, which gives a circuit of fifteen hundred and seventy-eight feet. I give you these details to impress you with some idea of the vast size of this building, which is the most remarkable point about it, and speaks most forcibly to the imagination; and I can assure you, that when you behold these monks, covered with white and wandering like ghosts in these immense passages, you seem to be transported into a new and fantastic world.

I have told you that St. Bruno founded this convent. It was also he who established the rules under which the monks live. They are at the same time anchorites and monks.

Louisa. I think that I know what an anchorite is, but I am ignorant of the meaning of the word monk.

Mr. Clement. The religious persons who live separately are called recluses, hermits, or anchorites. Those who live together are termed monks. Thus,

the Fathers who were scattered in the desert of Thebais were anchorites; and those of various names living together in convents were monks. The Carthusians are monks, because they inhabit the same dwelling and have certain occupations in common; they are also recluses, because they cannot go out of their cell without permission; there they take their meals; their food is conveyed to them by a turning box, so that they do not even see the person who brings it to them. They are forbidden to speak, except when they go out to walk, and during certain relaxations. On Sundays, and on the greater festivals they eat in the refectory; but, as if this privilege were grudgingly bestowed, the table is so arranged that they sit back to back instead of facing one another. With the exception of a few hours which they are permitted to devote to manual labour in their cells, all their time is spent in religious services, prayers and litanies, recited either together or in private. They have a service at midnight; and when the bell summons them, each brother, furnished with a dark lantern, repairs to the church, where the exercise lasts four hours. Even there they are separate, although together; each friar has his stall, which, in place of being breast high is raised in such a manner as entirely to separate every one from his neighbour.

They are confined very strictly. They only go out

on their days of exercise, which are not fixed and occur rarely. They go to the chapel of St. Bruno, or to a small wooden summer-house which overlooks the convent, and to which a beautiful avenue of beech and fir trees leads; so that although they are surrounded by the works of God in their finest and most majestic forms, they scarcely ever enjoy the scene.

Their diet is not less strict than the rest of their life. Meat is entirely forbidden them. Even when they are sick, they cannot obtain permission to touch it. In case of sickness the rules may be relaxed in other respects, but never in this. Over and above Lent, they keep very long fasts, and on Friday and Saturday they take nothing but bread and water. They always lie on straw and use clothes and shirts of wool.

Mrs. Beaumont. What austere rules! More suitable, I think, to foster pride, than the spirit of the gospel.

Mr. Clement. I have heard very opposite judgments passed upon the Carthusians. Some, struck with the renouncement of the world, with this self-denial and these rigorous privations, look upon them as saints; as beings who have nothing earthly about them, and think that their method is the surest to attain celestial happiness. Others again, considering only this mode of life an overturning of the laws of nature, engraven by the Creator on the hearts of all

men, and thinking that the only object of life is to procure as much enjoyment as possible, look upon them as madmen who know not how to profit by the blessings which are scattered so profusely over the earth. These opinions are both exaggerated in different ways. If we would form a correct judgment of the Carthusians, it must be in the light of the gospel. I need not attempt to prove to you, that monastic orders were neither instituted by our Saviour, nor by his apostles, nor countenanced by them.

Mr. Beaumont. It seems to me they had their origin in this manner. I think that in view of the evil that is in the world, Christians of a weak and timid character become so distressed and afflicted that they felt the desire of withdrawing from it, so as to have no connection with any but their fellow-Christians, with whom they might live, forming a society which should devote itself entirely to meditation and prayer.

Mr. Clement. It is very possible that such may have been the origin of many religious associations. These feelings may arise in a well-disposed heart; but are they consistent with the spirit and aim of the gospel? I think not. This life is represented as a combat. Our time ought to be employed, not only for our own good, but also for the good of our fellow-men. Christians are the bearers of a heavenly light, which

ought not to be hid under a bushel. When our Saviour prayed for his disciples, he did not ask his Father to take them out of the world, but to keep them from the evil that is in the world; he directed them to lead an active, not a contemplative life. Prayer is the means of fulfilling the duties which are imposed upon us, and not the end which is proposed to us; to keep ourselves entirely occupied with prayer, without also acting, is doing but the half of what God requires of us, and not even that in the way which he directs.

Mr. Beaumont. I think entirely with you. Far from beholding, in this desire to retire from the world and to live in absolute seclusion, the marks of eminent piety, I see rather a weakness of faith, which, if it were stronger would surmount the discouragement connected with the feeling of abhorrence at the evil around us.

Mr. Clement. If from the origin we pass to the institutions themselves, with the many abuses which we find have been successively introduced, what could we not say! I know how to estimate the immense works which have been performed in convents, in the pursuit of science and letters, while the rest of society has been immersed in barbarism. I know that they have rendered great services in copying manuscripts, and that they have preserved works which but for them would have been lost. I know

also, (and I bless God for it,) that in these retreats have been hid faithful worshippers, who lived in communion with their Saviour; but all this cannot counterbalance the spirit of self-righteousness which so entirely prevails in convents. One is astonished and grieved to see men, who call themselves Christians, heap penance upon penance, and service upon service, and think that their sufferings and penances are so many steps whereby they can mount to heaven. After what I have told you of the rules of the Carthusians, you will understand that they think themselves in the best path, because their austerities are so great. They thus really put endurances in the place of the Saviour. They often seek his image: but it is not a material image that we must have; the feeling of our helplessness, and of our need of a Divine Redeemer must be in the heart. No ceremonies or penances will ever make up for the want of this.

Charles. When you entered the convent, could you see the monks freely and talk with them?

Mr. Clement. You forget that silence is rigorously imposed upon them, and that they cannot go out of their cells without a special permission, unless to attend upon their devotional exercises, or to walk: and then you cannot speak to them; so that I slept in the convent without seeing the Carthusians, or having the least communication with them.

Charles. If I went there, I should much like to question them, to know how they feel and what they think.

Mr. Clement. I spoke to you of the brother Jean Maria, who receives travellers. There is also brother Justin, who sells the elixir, known under the name of "The Elixir of the Great Monastery." It is made in the convent. It is easy to see him, since his occupation forces him to have communication with the visitors. I have seen the General or Prior of the Order, who is usually visited by strangers.

Mrs. Beaumont. I pity these poor monks. They do not understand the word of God; and they are using means which cannot avail for their salvation. They need the new birth, without which they cannot see the kingdom of God. It makes one sad to think that men who make professions of piety should suppose that they please God and perform works of merit in renouncing the provisions of his mercy and refusing to partake of the bounties of his providence. God wishes us to be happy, and he has created every thing for us and made it good and useful for us, provided we use it with moderation and thanksgiving. Why should we deprive ourselves of a great part of the food placed at our disposal, or of the innocent enjoyments of social life? Why not elevate our thoughts towards God by the habitual contemplation of the glorious scenes of creation which surround

us, and by the tokens of his love and mercy to us and our fellow-men?

Mr. Clement. You would be still more sorry for them, if you had seen the grand and majestic natural scenery in the midst of which they dwell, and of which my account can give you but an imperfect idea.

Louisa. I assure you, that all that you have said has interested me much, and has given me a tolerably correct idea of the great Carthusian Monastery and the scenery of its environs.

Charles. I have also taken much pleasure in following you on your travels; and I shall enjoy exceedingly every evening of this kind that you will pass with us.

Mr. Clement. As you reflect, my dear children, how entirely these monks are destitute of the spirit of the gospel, notwithstanding the good intentions which may inspire them, you ought to think yourselves happy indeed in having this gospel within your reach; in being nourished in it from your infancy, and especially if you have been led by it into the way of salvation. Neglect not so great a benefit, and seek the aid of God's Holy Spirit that his word may be a light to your feet and a lamp unto your path.

All the members of the family joined in thanking Mr. Clement for the pleasure he had afforded them. The children, in particular, expressed their desire of renewing their pleasant evenings.

H. Dare del.

MONT BLANC & THE SEA OF ICE *Page 85.*

P.S Duval Lith Ph

MONT BLANC, THE MER DE GLACE, AND THE MONTAUVERT.

"LET us lose no time by way of preface, I beg," said Charles to Mr. Clement, as soon as he had entered with his family. "Here is the arm-chair waiting for you, please to take a seat and tell us if you rested well at the Priory."

Mr. Clement. Very well, indeed. I rose the next morning with a disposition to be active, and to climb the mountains, but as I had by no means the time to see every thing, I was under the necessity of choosing the route which would consume as little time as possible, and to consider also the item of expense. Every thing is very dear among these mountains. The hotels, the guides, the mules, are worth their weight in gold, as people say; and if you make any complaint, or wish any deduction to be made, they answer you "it is according to the regulation and that has been made by the king." It would be useless to make objection, and your only course is to put up with it. All, or very nearly all, the inhabitants of Chamouny are

numbered among the guides. It is a very gainful occupation, but the guides of the present day are not, as formerly they were, men trained in this particular pursuit. You find very few who remind you of the guides of former days, who acted in that character to the first scientific explorers of this region. The natives of Chamouny are in general intelligent, industrious, and active; they willingly leave their country to acquire a little property, and they bring back also some instruction, so that the guides have a certain politeness of manners and language. Their fidelity has never failed under the severest trials.

I made arrangements with one of them, and took a mule to accomplish the ascent of the Green Mountain and to visit the Sea of Ice. As this journey is taken by all travellers who visit Chamouny, the natives have made it their business to keep the road in order, so that the ascent is not difficult. You can, if you choose, go up to the very top on your mules. The first part of the road takes you along a path on the side of the mountain through the shade of a forest of firs, which nevertheless does not entirely deprive you of the view of the valley. A little nearer the middle of the journey is found the fountain of Caillet, of which the water is remarkably good. You stop a short time under this little esplanade, as much for the purpose of resting yourself, as that you may look about at your leisure. After this

spot, the path becomes rough and steep. You follow still for some time the side of Chamouny and the Arve which is at your feet; but afterwards you turn imperceptibly to reach the summit of the mountain, which is rounded and covered with a verdant green sward, ornamented with tufts of rhododendrons and other alpine flowers. Here are seen the welcome covering of the hospital, a hut, and a little inn, where travellers are received. You can rest there, take some refreshment, and then continue your route.

I admired this Green Mountain, covered entirely with wood and meadows, from which it probably takes its name. It is situated at the foot of the Needles of Chamouny. The rear of the mountain sinks straight down into the Sea of Ice, to the brink of which it takes but a few moments to descend.

I stood still to witness this spectacle, of which I had before formed no idea. I should describe it as a sea, whose waves, tempest-tossed, have suddenly been transformed into ice by an Almighty Hand. Domes and steeples of ice surround it. The sight is imposing and august, I might even say frightful. I thought of the Israelites at the foot of Mount Sinai, saying, "Let us not behold God, lest we die." I was absorbed and oppressed by the thought of the overwhelming power of God manifested in these grand exhibitions of nature; when my eye being directed to the castle, I perceived in the shelter of

stones and rocks some beautiful little flowers of wonderful delicacy and brilliancy. I gathered them with care. They showed me in a striking manner, that the God who appeared so terrible amidst these scenes of desolation was also a kind father, who never leaves himself without witness among his children. I gathered these flowers, and said to myself, since even amidst ice and rocks, and these convulsive throes of nature, He produces and fosters these frail and delicate flowers, how much more will he protect and save thee, O thou of little faith! Thus the sight of these lowly plants took away the terror inspired by the view of this wild scene, filled my heart with gentler emotions, and gave me power to examine, one by one, the other beauties which were before my eyes.

This sea of ice is many miles in length. About six miles from the Green Mountain, it is divided into two parts. At the place where I was, its breadth is a little more than a mile and a half; but I should not have estimated it at so much. It seemed to me that if the road had been even, a quarter of an hour would have been sufficient to have crossed it. Upon the opposite shore, my eye was arrested by the steeple of Dru, a magnificent obelisk of pure granite, rising above the valley. The Green Needle, still more elevated than the Dru, is seen in the background, and a little to the east, and on the same side of the Sea of

Ice, you see the Friars' Needle, and that of Sichaud, whose indented summits and rosy lines produce a delightful effect.

Near the edge of the Sea of Ice, on the spot where I was, they called my attention to a stone, which seemed to have been placed there so as to be a shelter for the traveller. You cannot stand under it, but if you sit, you can be sheltered from the cold, which in this climate is very penetrating during all seasons. On this stone I read the names of Windham and Pococke, and my guide told me that it was here that these two Englishmen rested, who were the first to explore this region—for at that time there was no hut nor inn where they could find repose.

I wished to walk upon the Sea of Ice, a matter which is attended with some difficulties, on account of the deep gaps with which it is furrowed, and the blocks piled up which impede the passage; but with a stick shod with iron, and a good guide, whose directions must be precisely followed, you can take some hundred steps upon it. I was much surprised at the agility of my guide, who, with the help of his stick, leaped nimbly over enormous crevices, in which he would have been engulfed if he had lost his footing.

In the middle of the Sea of Ice is found the garden. It is a very curious trip to take, but it requires a whole day, after setting out from your resting-place

in the Green Mountain. Besides this, you must be robust and accustomed to this kind of expedition, for it is incomparably more toilsome than that which I am now going to describe to you, and is not without danger. You must be provided with iron sticks and shoes with nails in them. You must take a covering of black or white crape, and be provided with spectacles of coloured glass, to preserve the eyes and the complexion from the powerful action of the light. My guide informed me that the garden was a lonely island in the midst of the ice, which could not be reached without much difficulty. It is a rock, sloping on the southern side, and sheltered by the mountains from the north. It is covered with verdure, and in spite of the eternal snows with which it is surrounded, in summer it is clothed with a turf of beautiful freshness, enamelled with alpine flowers.

Louisa. How beautiful must this garden appear in the midst of the sea of ice! I am sorry, sir, that you did not go to see it.

Mr. Clement. I should have been delighted to see it; but my time, as I have told you, was limited.

I proposed to myself to visit the source of the Arveiron, which issues from the lower part of the Glacier des Bois, (of the woods.) It is a grotto of ice from which the torrent escapes, which, after a course of a mile and a half, unites with the Arve. This grotto of ice varies in appearance every year, in pro-

portion as the frosts have been more or less severe. Sometimes it is divided in two by a partition of ice. When the heat has been very severe, so that the ice melts with great rapidity, no one can enter it. I was there in just such a year, and was forced to content myself with beholding, without actually entering, this vault of ice from which flows the white waters of the Arveiron. My guide informed me that even in the most favourable seasons it was very dangerous to penetrate this grotto, as well on account of the piercing cold which is there felt, as by reason of the pieces of ice which are often detached from the vault. Three travellers who visited it, about forty years ago, were imprudent enough to desire, notwithstanding the remonstrances of their guides, to discharge their fire-arms within it. This explosion caused a vibration which threw down a part of the vault, and the three unhappy men were buried under it. They succeeded in extricating two of them, with broken limbs, but the third fell a victim to his imprudence.

In descending the Green Mountain I admired the high and beautiful precipices which surround, on all sides, the valley of Chamouny.

The highest of these two ranges has Mont Blanc for its most elevated point; the other, less lofty, has the general name of the chain or line of the Aiguilles Rouges, (Red Needles.)

Charles. Now we are going to ascend Mont Blanc, are we not?

Mr. Clement. Patience. I have promised to take you to Mont Blanc, but not to carry you up to the top of it. The ascension is no small undertaking, and in going to Chamouny I had no intention of attempting it. Many reasons prevented me from so doing. It is a very expensive journey. A guide costs about eight dollars a day, and each traveller is obliged to take two; the mules also cost eight dollars; and the whole expense of the ascent falls but little short of one hundred and twenty dollars, which is a large draft on small purses. Besides, it takes three days to accomplish it, and it involves fatigues and dangers of every description.

It was in the year 1786 that the first successful ascent took place. It was accomplished, the 8th of August, by Doctor Paccard and James Balmat of the Priory. The following year Professor De Saussure ascended it, and made some scientific observations; but only after two fruitless attempts, which were sufficient to have discouraged him. He had brought with him his wife and sister, who waited at Chamouny, and by means of a telescope followed him with their eyes as far as possible.

Mrs. Beaumont. What anxiety these poor women must have felt, and how often must they have been

terrified with the apprehension that M. De Saussure was buried beneath the snows, or precipitated to the bottom of a gulf!

Charles. Yes, but think what must have been their joy to see him again; and what pleasure to have succeeded in an ascent, the like of which had been but once before accomplished!

Mr. Clement. From that time till 1839, there had been only twenty-four successful ascents. These twenty-four ascents were made by thirty-two travellers, without counting their guides. I say nothing of the numerous attempts which have fallen through. Even while I was at Chamouny, many Englishmen had gone there for the express purpose of attempting the ascent. Preparations were made to receive them the next day, if they succeeded, with all possible honours; but they returned the same evening, none of them having gone further than the first resting-place. The weather was very bad, and snow storms had taken place on Mont Blanc, a thing which never happens in the valleys. Under these, many unfortunate travellers were known to have been buried, and these persons hastened to retrace their steps.

Charles. I cannot understand how any one can determine to go back after having decided upon the enterprise, and actually performed a part of the journey.

Mr. Beaumont. My child, it would be nothing short of madness to persevere when the fury of the elements is thus abroad; and if a prompt decision to return was not made in such cases, the most serious accidents, and even death itself, might result.

Mr. Clement. Almost all the travellers who have accomplished the ascent of Mont Blanc are Englishmen. There have been two or three Americans, as many Poles, a few inhabitants of the Priory; two Frenchmen only, and one French woman; for you must know that two women have had the courage to execute this perilous ascent. In 1809, the wife of a guide, named Maria Paradis, accomplished it. When she arrived at the Red Rocks, her strength failed, but her companions carried her up to the summit, desiring that such fearless courage as she had shown should be crowned with success. And in 1838, Mrs. Henrietta d'Augeville, notwithstanding all the fatigues which she endured on the route, persevered and arrived at the summit of Mont Blanc.

If men had half as much fortitude and determination in overcoming the difficulties and temptations of life as travellers display in encountering the peril and fatigues of such adventures as we have described, we should not so often hear of sad failures and disastrous falls. The pilgrim who is journeying

to the other world has a better guide, a safer path, and a far more desirable end of his journey than any earthly travellers can have. Why then do they so often wander out of the way and pierce themselves through with many sorrows?

THE WONDERS OF DAUPHINY.

The Beaumont family and their friends, Mr. and Mrs. Clement and Lydia and Henry, were seated around a pleasant fire, which prevented them from feeling the cold. They were enjoying an agreeable chat, when Charles, addressing himself to Mr. Clement, said,

"Sir, I have not forgotten your promise to tell us something of the wonders of Dauphiny. We can devote one evening to this, if it will be agreeable to you."

The others having expressed the same desire, Mr. Clement cheerfully proceeded to gratify them.

"I would forwarn you," said he, "that they give to these different objects the name of wonders, because they attribute supernatural effects to them. I only mention these popular errors to show you their absurdity. Besides, now-a-days, nobody puts any faith in these supposed extraordinary occurrences, except superstitious people and persons of little education.

"These wonders are, the Inaccessible Mountain, the Trembling Meadow, the Tower without Poison, the Bridge of Claix, the Burning Fountain, the Caves of Sassenage, and the Grotto of Balme.

Louisa. Have you seen all these wonders?

Mr. Clement. All except the Trembling Meadow. This is a little island in a lake or river, near Gap, and they assure you that it often trembles all over. This is not very astonishing, for you know that in the lakes of Sweden there are many of these floating islands, formed by the roots of trees interlaced, in which has been collected vegetable mould on which plants grow. The meadow of which we speak may have been formed in the same way. There is nothing wonderful about it, but they try to make it so, by saying that every year this island comes to the shore in order to be mowed, and returns to its place when the operation is finished!

Charles. A polite meadow, indeed! I should think people only said so to amuse themselves while they do not really believe it.

Mr. Beaumont. I am by no means certain that there are not some persons still who believe it. There is, to be sure, a great improvement in the education of all classes; but there exist many more foolish prejudices, and more popular superstitious errors than is generally supposed. You can be easily convinced of this by conversing with ignorant

persons. Their credulity has often very injurious effects. Instruction in reading and writing, though of great importance, does not reach this evil. It will never be uprooted but by illuminating the mind by religious instruction, founded on the word of God. He who is convinced that God governs all, that he presides over all, that he does not suffer a sparrow to fall to the ground without his notice; such a man will not attribute any magical power to this or that particular spot, or to one combination of numbers more than another.

Mrs. Beaumont. Yes, men are naturally given to superstitions. This is shown to us by the desire which people always have to see prodigies, without seeking the natural explanations by which wonders are shown to be no more than ordinary occurrences. As to the Inaccessible Mountain, what does its name show but that nobody has ever reached the summit of it?

Mr. Clement. For a long time this ascent was deemed impossible, and though it has been ascended, the name "Inaccessible" is still retained. It is sometimes called Mount Needle! I have seen it far and near; for I have gone almost all around it, but I have never attempted to ascend it. It is situated at the distance of three miles from Grenoble, toward the south-west, in the midst of a basin formed by rocks, which are called the Rocks of Gresse, on account of a river of that name which flows into this

basin. The mountain itself has the form of an inverted cone, which makes the ascent of it so difficult. At first sight it has a striking and curious look, although not sufficient to claim for it the name of a wonder, if it were not that it has been conjured up into a retreat for hobgoblins and fairies. These last, they say, have here their bleaching-ground; and here, as they assure us, are to be seen pieces of cloth, of a beautiful whiteness, and who but fairies, they say, could spread their linen in a spot which no one could reach? This beautiful cloth is nothing else but snow.

Charles VIII., king of France, being at Grenoble in 1492, while on his way to Italy, heard of the wonders of the Inaccessible Mountain, and to assure himself of their truth, sent there his chamberlain, Don Jullien, captain of Montelimart, who made this ascent on the 25th of June, accompanied by some others. He stayed there three days, and from thence he wrote to the president of the parliament of Grenoble, making a recital of the horrible dangers which he and his party had gone through. They sent to him a notary, to write upon the very spot an account of this memorable expedition; but the notary, less courageous than the captain, went only to the foot of the mountain. The account was drawn up without him, and they did not fail to make mention of strange animals and of many other things which had

no existence, save in the imagination of those who had come there fully determined to witness something supernatural.

Charles. Is it the only time that the top of the mountain has been ever reached?

Mr. Clement. No; but a very long interval elapsed before any one had the courage to imitate the captain of Montelimart. It was not till 1834, that a second ascent was attempted by several persons, of whom one only arrived at the top; this was John Listard, who relates that he thought himself many times in danger of losing his life; that he knew not where to put his feet, and that the height from which his eye glanced made him so dizzy that he thought himself every moment about to fall. A magnificent view of the beautiful plains and picturesque mountains which were near presented itself. Upon the mountain itself, grass and flowers were to be seen, but nothing in the shape of fairies or hobgoblins, or any thing else of the kind. And after this, the mountain lost its popular fame. The rout, once marked out, has been followed up by many young persons, and the ascent now, though looked upon as difficult, is by no means impossible.

The "Tour sans Venin" or the "Tower without poison," is situated at a little distance from Grenoble, upon an eminence, which, overlooking the beautiful village of Seyscunet, presents a fine panorama of the

surrounding country; a fertile plain, watered by the Drac and the Isere, hills and mountains covered with verdure, and the horizon bounded by the Alps, majestic and covered with eternal snows. It is worth while, in order to enjoy this fine spectacle, to climb a rugged mountain, for you are recompensed for it by the contemplation of one of the finest scenes of nature. As for the tower itself, it is nothing but a line of wall falling into ruin on all sides. Near it is a little chapel and a little cemetery for the inhabitants of the neighbouring village, called Pariset. Where is the wonder? you want to ask me, I know, for that is the great point of attraction. The name shows you—"without poison," it is said; that is, if you carry on this tower a reptile, an insect, or any poisonous animal, it would die at once by the effect of the charm which belongs to these walls! Whence arises this superstition, it is hard to say; perhaps from the entire absence of venemous reptiles or insects; a circumstance not at all surprising, in an elevated spot where the atmosphere is piercing and cold, which is contrary to the nature of these animals, who are fond of moisture and heat.

Louisa. What was this tower formerly?

Mr. Clement. I will tell you the various opinions on the subject, for there is no certainty about it. Some would have its existence as far back as the time of the Allobroges, and maintain that it was an altar of

the Druids. But this is by no means likely, for the construction of the rest of this wall has no resemblance whatever to that of the Druidical monuments. Others say that it was consecrated to the worship of the goddess Isis, and that from this is derived the name Pariset, which, as I have told you, the neighbouring village bears. Finally, some say, (and it is the most probable conjecture,) that it was formerly part of a feudal manor, which was situated on this mountain.

When you descend from the summit on which the tower is situated, you are still at a great elevation. You enjoy the view of the plain, and find yourself in a wood formed of beautiful trees and watered by a spring so plentiful that it forms rivulets and water-falls, which give to this spot a life and a freshness which make it extremely agreeable. Hard by, to the left of the tower, is a spot of very different appearance. It is called the Small Monastery, on account of some resemblance to the Great Monastery. It is a narrow passage between lofty rocks, which shut out all the view, and make you believe that you are far from any habitations. Firs are almost the only trees that are to be found there. Excavations formed in the rocks afford shelter against the rain.

Charles. I should very much like to visit all these places, but it seems to me that the Burning Fountain must be more astonishing than any of which

you have spoken. It is a name which excites my curiosity.

Mr. Clement. If you form too magnificent an idea of it, you would be disappointed at seeing it.

There were several friends who joined our party. We took the road of Claix, which is certainly six miles in length. There is on each side of the road an avenue of trees and a rivulet. These trees are of various kinds; plane, linden, elm and sycamore. It was the end of September, and the hues of autumn presented all their rich varieties; from the fresh and almost delicate green of the linden to the lively red of the sycamore. The rising sun bestowed new liveliness upon these hues, so that the painter would have been able to have enriched his palette by the sight of them. Especially if he had added the soft green of the meadows, seen through the trees; and the whitish green of the willows with which they were shaded. Further on, some beautiful hills present themselves, to the right of which was seen the village of Saysinelt and its numerous and pleasant country houses. This village is overlooked by the tower, of which I have spoken to you. On the hills, to the right, were also country houses, very well situated. Among others was the castle of Echirolles, which used to belong to the Templars; their arms are still to be seen over one of the principal entrances.

At the end of this immense avenue, which we

traversed with delight, without taking our eyes from the fine view for a moment, we arrived at the Bridge of Claix.

Louisa. This bridge is also a wonder, is it not, sir?

Mr. Clement. By some it is ranked among the variety of wonders, but others deny it any such honour, because it is entirely the work of man, and no particular efficacy is attributed to it. Nevertheless, as it is necessary in the enumeration of wonders to make up the number seven, those who will not admit the bridge of Claix replace it by little flint stones shaped like a bean, which are found on the banks of the torrent of Sassenage, to which is attributed the property of extracting minute objects which may by accident have got into the eyes. You will do as you choose, either give the bridge of Claix the name of a wonder, or refuse it. I dare say that at the time when it was built it must have excited great admiration, as at that time bridges were much more rare than they are now. It can be traced back to the time of Lesdiguieres. It is this duke who had it built. In fact, to him are owing almost all the remarkable monuments which are to be found in Dauphiny. This bridge is of a single very bold arch; to form an estimate of it, one must descend to the borders of the Drac and look at it from thence. This arch has about one hundred and sixty feet span

from one side to the other, and is one hundred and thirty feet in height. To reach the middle of the bridge, there is a steep ascent; when you arrive there, a picturesque scene bursts upon you. The Drac and its windings are seen in the middle of an immense bed of gravel, in the direction of the village of Risset. On the left bank of the Drac, appear numerous peaks, which rise gradually in the form of a sugar loaf; you see also the mountain of Saint Negier, which begins below Saissinet, and the tower, and which extends to this point, at the foot and even almost to the top. It is green and well cultivated, and its summit is surmounted with a rampart of rocks, which are no bad likeness of the fortifications of a European town.

We then came into a rich and cultivated country, where every thing presented the appearance of plenty. We passed to Orf, and almost at the exit from this town, we quitted the high-road, which we had followed up to that point, and took a cross-road. When we arrived at Saillans, a little hamlet, we were obliged to abandon our carriage, as a little further on, the way became only passable for foot passengers. We recruited our strength by a frugal breakfast, which we eat on the grass, under the shade of a fine walnut tree. We walked nearly an hour before arriving at the Burning Fountain, which was the object we were in quest of; although, to be sure, we did not

travel very fast, frequently stopping to gather flowers and look for stones and insects. We had to climb a very difficult mountain, after which we passed through the village of St. Barthelemy; we obtained there the different things that we were in need of, and a person to carry them and act as our guide. We soon descended, and got into a dry and barren ravine, the bottom of which is formed of black broken stones, resembling slate.

You think, I am sure, that there is a fountain which actually burns, whose flames are visible, or that at least there is a fountain whose water is warm. The name of the Burning Fountain might make you suppose it, but for all that it is not so. There is no fountain, but only a brook, which flows at the bottom of this valley. It leaps from rock to rock and forms, in this way, little cascades whose murmur imparts to the situation a liveliness of which it is destitute in itself. This water has not that clearness which is sufficient of itself to make it pleasant. It is turbid and whitish. One must be very thirsty indeed, to attempt to drink it. It is quite cold, and there is nothing which justifies the term "burning;" but if you dig out some of the blackish ground of which I have spoken to you, from the brink of the water, you will hear a noise as of something boiling, and will see the flame issue; or if you do not see it at once, if you apply a lighted match you will see

the flames rise up as when you light a stream of gas.

We arrived at this fountain full of ideas of the flames about which we had been talking so much, and we gave to one another mutual injunctions not to burn our clothes. We had brought from the little village of St. Barthelemy, a frying-pan and some eggs, and we calculated upon having the pleasure of making an omelet by these wonderful flames. But imagine our disappointment at the dim and faint light which answered for the object of our search! We removed the earth with our sticks; and applied lighted torches. A little flame escaped, but expired an instant after; and repeated trials produced no more satisfactory result. It seemed indeed a deception. We recalled with chagrin all the fine accounts which had been given us of this fountain, and were still more provoked because we had taken such a long and tedious journey to see so insignificant a thing.

An old visitor of the fountain who happened to be there, seeing our embarrassment and trouble, said, "You must have a pick-axe," and immediately sent the person who accompanied us to borrow one from the labourers who were near. Our hope revived. The pickaxe came, the good man seized it, made a deep and round hole in the earth, like those holes which the gipsies make use of, and which

serve them for furnaces to boil their kettles. "Hear the water boiling," said he, "we shall soon have a fire." We listened, and heard a noise like the boiling of water. We applied a torch, and in a moment a fine body of flame escaped and delighted us!

Charles. In good time. I assure you that I was beginning to be disturbed. I was afraid that all that you had heard were idle tales, and that you would take nothing by your long and toilsome journey, being obliged, besides, to carry back your frying-pan and eggs without making any use of them, but now that your fire is lighted, you are going to make your omelet.

Mr. Clément. We will not fail to do it, as soon as our fire is well built up. For that purpose we take pieces of hay, and small bits of dry wood, which we present to our beautiful flame; and when they are lighted we apply them to the surrounding earth, and new jets of flame spring up all around. Now our fire was well lighted, and when we drew near, the heat was very sensible. I need not tell you our joy, as I am sure you must feel it, and that you would have been glad to have been there. Now we can make our omelet; the frying-pan is put on the fire; the butter melts; the eggs are cooked, and soon a little piece is distributed to each person, delighted at eating it, and at having seen an omelet made by this fire coming out of the earth and nou-

P. S. Duval Lith Ph.

rished by no combustible substance. We then perceived in the midst of the flames which continued to rise, little holes which contained water in a state of ebullition, which was nevertheless cold. We contemplated this strange phenomena for some time; but afterwards having approached too near, we made the earth fall in and stop the holes from which the flames escaped, and they disappeared. But we had seen enough, and we quitted the fountain and its magical streams, delighted at the sight.

Lydia. I should not regret the fatigue of visiting this fountain. I should be well repaid for it all. But you told us that the flames issued without disturbing the earth or your doing any thing to draw them out.

Mr. Clement. Yes, that depends upon the season and the weather. Sometimes the flames issue from many places without there being any necessity for digging out the earth, or applying a lighted straw. These flames are then visible from quite a distance, and when you come near to the fountain you enjoy all at once the sudden spectacle, without having had, like us, the fear of seeing nothing and being obliged to wait.

Henry. It is very pleasant to enjoy it all at once; but this uncertainty would produce a double pleasure, and I think, upon the whole, that I would rather see it in that way.

Mrs. Beaumont. Young people are fond of whatever agitates and excites them. It is, besides, our nature to enjoy more keenly what is unexpected, and what we were afraid of not possessing. But tell us something, sir, of the nature of these flames; for we are not satisfied with merely seeing the wonder. We know that there is a multitude of facts that appear wonderful, because we are ignorant of their causes, but which appear very simple when their causes are explained.

Mr. Clement. That is just the case with this fountain. The earth contains what we call hydrogen gas. Whenever, from any cause, this gas is brought in contact with the atmospheric air, it ignites at once, and in passing through the water gives it a movement which has the appearance of boiling while it is really cold. As to the absurd tales which are coined about this fountain, they are so ridiculous that it is not worth while for me to tell them to you.

Louisa. But do tell them, sir. They must be very amusing.

Mr. Clement. It is pretended that a town formerly stood on the spot from whence these flames arise. A beggar appeared in it, but no one would give him any assistance, and this apparent beggar was a Divine being, who had taken that form; and who, provoked at the hard-heartedness of the inhabitants, caused fire

from heaven to rain upon them, which made an utter end of the city, of which there remains no vestige except the flames, which rise from the place where it was formerly situated!

This account, so absurd and so unworthy of the dignity of a Divine being, is a new proof of that spirit of superstition of which we just now were speaking; and we ought to make all possible exertions to deliver the poor people who put faith in such ridiculous stories from their bondage. They are not, indeed, so commonly believed as in former times; but if there were only one person who is still so foolish as to believe them, we should desire to illuminate his mind, and to teach him the knowledge of God, as he is displayed in his word and works. This will infallibly correct these superstitious errors.

THE SILK-WORM AND THE CATERPILLAR.

"MOTHER," said Louisa, on entering the room where her mother was seated at her work, while Mr. Beaumont was reading near her, "will you do me a great favour?"

Mrs. Beaumont. Certainly, if I can, and if this great favour involves nothing hurtful. Come, sit down by me, and compose yourself, for you are all out of breath, and tell me what it is you want.

Louisa sat down by her mother and said, "As I was returning from my walk, I went into the farm-house and found Margaret there, engaged in cutting up leaves. I asked her what she was doing, and she said I am preparing some supper for my new guests. Afterwards she told me that her silk-worms had been hatched for some days, and the account she gave me of these little animals was so interesting that I was seized with a desire to have some to raise for myself, if you would allow me to have them?"

Mrs. Beaumont. Certainly, my dear; but you must begin by procuring a suitable place for them, otherwise you will not succeed, as they must have a proper degree of heat.

Louisa. Very well, mother, if it will not incommode you, I will put them in the little antechamber which is by your room. The sun shines there most of the day.

Mrs. Beaumont having given her consent to her daughter's plans, Louisa went to get a large flat basket, and came back with it, along with her brother whom she had met. Julia was with them also, perfectly delighted, because her sister had promised to let her help her in the rearing of the silk-worms. Mr. Beaumont had the kindness to go and assist his children. They came back soon afterwards, to tell their mother that all was ready in the little room for the reception of the silk-worms. It was agreed that they should go the next day to ask Margaret for some of them, and to make arrangements for Charles and Louisa to gather leaves on the nearest mulberry tree, for in their eagerness they refused everybody's assistance.

"Do you know, Charles," said Julia, "how they make the silk-worms hatch. They put their eggs into boiling water, and the little worms come out."

"In boiling water!" said Charles, "why that would burn them, instead of hatching them."

Julia. No, no, Margaret told me so.

Mr. Beaumont. She probably gave you some other explanations which you did not understand. Since you want to raise silk-worms, there would be no harm before you commence, in your having some more correct notions of the method of doing so, than those which Julia would give her brother.

The silk-worm takes its name from the fine silk which it furnishes; it is called, besides, the mulberry-caterpillar, because it feeds on that tree. The silk-worm originally came from China. It was brought into Europe in the time of the Emperor Justinian, who sent some friars to the Indies to procure some silk-worms' eggs, and to become acquainted with the manner of hatching them and of raising the worms. The emperors alone made use of the silk as an article of clothing. The date at which they were introduced into France is not very ancient, for Henry II. is the first who wore silk stockings. But since that time silk has become very common, as you are aware.

In China, no pains are taken to raise silk-worms. The butterflies deposit their eggs on the bark of the mulberry trees; the year following they hatch; feed on the trees, and spin their cocoons, which the Chinese have nothing to do but to gather.

Julia. It must be a pretty sight to see these trees

covered over with yellow and white cocoons. I should like so much to see it.

Charles. You will never see that, my dear, unless you take a trip to China, which I do not suppose you are very anxious to do. Father, would it not be impossible here, where it is so much less warm than in China, to raise the silk-worm in the open air?

Mr. Beaumont. Yes, my son, your question is very appropriate; not only would there not be sufficient heat, but our changeable climate, subject to rains and tempests, would almost always destroy this important harvest. We are therefore obliged to raise them in the house. But I shall leave to your mother the task of speaking to you of the rearing of silk-worms, as she has seen a great deal of them, after I have first said a word of the insect itself. You know its shape, and you have doubtless remarked six little black points ranged on the front and side of its head. Three of these points are convex and transparent, and are thought to be the eyes of the animal. You have also seen upon the rings, along the sides of the insect, small oval openings; these are the organs of respiration. What shows this to be the case, is that if you stop them up with some greasy substance, the silk-worm dies at once. The stomach is a canal which passes through the whole body and which is recognised by its green colour. But what will in-

terest you most, are two little vessels which, beginning at the head, pass near the stomach, and after many windings continue along the side of the back. These vessels are the reservoirs of the silk. They become thin and slender, like the finest thread, and end in the thread-piece spinner, which is placed below the mouth and pierced with two extremely fine holes, which afford a passage to the glutinous matter contained in the reservoirs. This matter, which has the property of drying at once in the air, becomes the silk with which the worm forms its coccoon. Man takes possession at once of the coccoon; spins it, and draws out the silk, which serves, as you know, for a variety of different purposes, both useful and agreeable.

Louisa. Now, mother, you will tell us something of the manner of raising these curious little animals. I am very much interested in it; and besides it is necessary for me, since I am to have the care of them.

Mrs. Beaumont. I am only going to point out the principal things. You will learn the rest by observation and experience, which are the best teachers you can have. It is necessary, first, to prepare a room for them, which must be large, well aired and having a good exposure. You are sometimes obliged to make a fire in the room, in order that the worms may have the requisite degree of warmth; but it is above

all important that the temperature be always the same, changes being very injurious to them. They commonly hatch the silk-worm eggs when the buds of the mulberry are beginning to expand, so that the young worms may have their nourishment all ready. There are climates where the natural heat is sufficient to hatch the eggs, but in those that have a temperature like ours, artificial means must be employed. Formerly, women warmed these eggs in bed, and carried them afterwards upon their persons that they might not lose this heat; but this method is not in use at present. For the heat of the human body, there has been substituted a kind of small house or table of tin, with drawers in which the egg is enclosed, and the whole is warmed by the vapour of boiling water, which is introduced below. This method succeeds very well, as it has the double advantage of affording the necessary degree of heat and of giving it with great equality. So you see, my dear Julia, that boiling water is in fact made use of to hatch the silk-worm, but they are not put in it as you incorrectly supposed.

When the silk-worms are hatched, they are put in very clean boxes, and are fed with mulberry leaves, which are cut into little pieces that they may eat them more easily, for they are extremely small. The worms are subject to four sicknesses or moultings, which occur when they change their skin.

When they are in this critical situation, it is necessary to let them rest about two days without giving them any thing to eat. After the fourth change, they eat largely, acquire all the size that they are capable of, assume a yellowish and transparent colour, which is a sign of their being in a fit state to yield their silk; in fact, they then seek a favourable spot to make their cocoons; and at this time some broom, or branches of other brushes, must be procured for them, that they may fix themselves properly thereon.

An extreme cleanliness is necessary for the silk-worms. You must be very careful, Louisa, that the baskets, or the boards in which you place them, are perfectly clean and free from any bad smell. Every time they change their skin, the old leaves must be all taken away, together with the filth which accumulates upon them, and their place must be supplied by fresh and clean ones. You must take care that your leaf is not moist, nor decayed, and if the weather appears to threaten rain, you must lay in a stock of leaves before-hand, in order that your little family may not be obliged to fast, or to feed on moist leaves, which will be injurious to them. You need give yourself comparatively little trouble, as you will have but a small number of worms to raise, but when you have large numbers of them, it is necessary to take a good deal of pains with them, to

be always on the watch, and to have industrious and ready servants.

Louisa. Many thanks for your good advice, my dear mother. You may be sure that I will profit by it, and that you will not have to reprove me for neglect in the bringing up of my interesting family.

The next morning, Mrs. Beaumont, accompanied by Louisa, repaired to Margaret's house; where they made their choice from among the finest silk-worms, which they put into a basket and deposited them in the little room prepared for their reception. Louisa had cleaned the frame well out, and had covered it with fresh leaves, and she had the satisfaction of seeing the silk-worms the moment after she had laid them down, eat very heartily.

Louisa faithfully adhered to the promise which she had made of attending to her silk-worms. She gathered the leaves herself, of which she had always a stock ahead that the worms might be in no danger of suffering; for she knew, that if God on the one hand has permitted us to profit by the industry of animals, even to the extent of allowing us to put them to death for food or for other purposes, he has enjoined upon us, on the other hand, to take care of them, and not to let them suffer by our negligence or evil treatment. She knew that it would be unpardonable, when we wish to enjoy the raising of any

animal, to withhold from it the necessary attentions, and to make it merely the sport of our curiosity.

Mrs. Beaumont never would have permitted such a thing, but would have deprived her children at once of every animal on which they inflicted suffering. She had no complaints to make of Louisa; she asked advice when she did not know how to act, and followed it in every respect. Charles was of great assistance to his sister, particularly in climbing up the mulberry trees to gather the leaves from the highest branches. Even little Julia was of some use, for she collected the leaves which fell under the trees, she fed the silk-worms, and in fact she divided her attention between them and her chickens. The three were delighted, and the silk-worms succeeded to a wonder.

One day Louisa had asked her mother to go into her little room to see her worms. They had got through their fourth moulting; they were clean, well arranged, and were eating with great relish the fine fresh leaves which the attendant was giving them. They made a noise in munching them, which Julia listened to with great pleasure.

Louisa. See, mother, how beautiful they are! I think they will soon make their cocoons.

Mrs. Beaumont. Yes, you must procure the broom.

Louisa. Oh! I have that already. Charles has got it for me. He has been very attentive to me, and

I should be very glad to do something for him in return. I was thinking that when I got the silk from my cocoons I would give him some for a pair of stockings.

Julia. And, mother, I should like to knit them. I would rather make a pair of gloves, but the fingers would be too hard for me.

Mrs. Beaumont. I do not know how you will be able to get through with a pair of stockings. You know how to knit, to be sure, but you do not understand how to manage a stocking.

Louisa. We have come to the conclusion to do it by halves; Julia will do the part that is plain, and I will take charge of the rest. Our offering will be the more acceptable to Charles, as the work of both.

Mrs. Beaumont. My dear children, I am glad to see you always thus agreeing together, and animated with feelings of kindness toward one another. This agreement will, by the blessing of God, be a source of pure and true happiness to you.

At this moment some one knocked hesitatingly at the door of the room. Louisa went to open it, and Charles came in, saying, as he entered, "I knocked gently for fear of disturbing your silk-worms, as I know that the noise is bad for them. But I was eager to get in; for I have brought you two guests that you will be very glad to see." Having so said, he opened a box full of leaves, on which were two

splendid caterpillars. One of them was almost three inches in length. Its rings were of a beautiful black, tipped with yellow points. Each ring was separated by a band of black velvet, and this band was ornamented with three spots, two of them whitish and the other red. A red one also passed the whole length of the back. This caterpillar was caught on the branch of the euphorbia. The other one, which was caught on the branch of a pear tree, was only a little smaller than the first. It was of a transparent green, and was sprinkled over with protuberances whose points of turquoise blue resembled jewels set in chasing.

"Oh! what beauties these are," exclaimed Julia, "and how ugly these silk-worms look along-side of them!"

"To be sure they do," said Charles, "and we would have done much better to have got together as many caterpillars as we could find; and we should then have had a collection of them which would have excited the admiration of everybody; but as to these silk-worms, they are not worth showing."

This reflection damped Julia a little, who took a great interest in her silk-worms, but she found that they looked so mean alongside of the brilliant butterflies, that she sighed without saying any thing.

At this moment the bell rang for dinner, and Mrs. Beaumont said to Charles, "Leave your caterpillars.

They will be taken care of. Let us go down, so as not to keep your father waiting."

The next day the broom prepared by Charles was put near the silk-worms by Louisa and her brother, assisted by Margaret, who showed them how it should be done, and recommended them to let the silk-worms alone afterwards; "for," said she, "if you worry them they will not make their cocoons. In obedience to this advice, Louisa never went into the room except to feed those that were the most backward; and when they had all got upon the branches, she left off going in, to let them work at their ease. At the end of some days, Mrs. Beaumont called her children, and said to them, "now let us go into the room, for the harvest ought to be ready."

They went in, and were agreeably struck with the spectacle which presented itself. The room was full of cocoons, which looked like round golden balls, suspended by white threads. Louisa was enchanted, and could not cease to admire the industry of these little animals.

"Let us see your butterflies, Charles," said Mrs. Beaumont. "Perhaps their shell will not bear comparison with the cocoons, notwithstanding the beautiful dress of the caterpillar, of which the humble silk-worm is deprived."

Charles understood what his mother meant, and

went after the box which contained the caterpillars. He removed the leaves which were in the box, and found at the bottom two kinds of cocoons, larger than those of the silk-worm, but shapeless, and of a very dirty colour, by no means pretty to look at; and, besides, made with such large threads that it did not need a practised eye to discover that they could not furnish any web, whilst the silk-worm could give a very fine one.

"Well," said Mrs. Beaumont, "this is the result of looking only at the outside. See what wrong conclusions you come to by so doing. You break forth in raptures at whatever has a showy appearance, and neglect real merit when hid under a modest garb.

"God, my children, has made a vast variety in his creation. Some things seem to exist only to please the eye, others, which are deprived of the beauty which charms and attracts, are of the greatest use, and merit our deep attention. The gifts of Providence are distributed in a very equitable manner. The peacock, with all the magnificence of its plumage, has a song which repels by its dissonance; while the nightingale, a bird of humble and unobtrusive appearance, ravishes the ear with its song and charms every one. The hornet with its shining corslet does no good. It is but a useless parasite; while the industrious bee, which makes a delicious honey out of the nectar of flowers, presents an obscure and unpre-

tending exterior. We ought, then, to consider somewhat else besides the outside before we can adjust the relative merits of the objects of nature. It is especially at your age, my children, that the instructions of your parents in regard to this should be heeded. You are quite disposed to be carried away with a brilliant appearance. Charles thought that the caterpillars were worth more than the silk-worms, and Julia, sorry to see her favourite insects so slighted in comparison with those of her brother, knew not how to defend them.

"You see, too, in those little animals a representation of earthly grandeur, which dazzles and attracts the eyes while it produces nothing useful; and of Christian humility, which conceals itself, on the contrary, under a modest garb, and which does not seek observation, but which, by the blessings it spreads around, manifests the sentiments which animate it, and the Spirit of God, which gives it the principle of action. I cannot help comparing the caterpillar, in particular, to a frivolous woman, occupied entirely in the adornment of her person; her attire attracts attention and draws all eyes to her, but it is only to discover her emptiness and levity. This woman, like the caterpillar, monopolizes the admiration of all, but is of no use to any. The silk-worm, on the other hand, which, with so little outward show, is of so much real utility, puts me in mind of a Christian

woman whose appearance, always simple and modest, never draws attention to itself, and may even sometimes be despised by those who only judge after the exterior, but whose virtues and good works impress themselves in a retiring and quiet way on all around. She never loses any occasion of doing good and of being useful. Her life is full of occupation, while that of the worldly woman is empty and idle. She is also much the happier of the two, for she knows that she fulfils the purposes of her Creator, who has not made us to be useless beings, a burden to ourselves and to others, but expects that we should imitate him in doing good to all as we have opportunity."

Charles. My dear mother, you are right; and I assure you that, even without your just reflections, I see plainly that the caterpillars were not worth so much as the silk-worm. Besides, I said it a little in joke; but what I am sorry for is, that I displeased Julia. It shall never happen again.

Julia. I had no ill-feeling against you, for I knew that you did not intend to vex me.

Mrs. Beaumont. You will be still more struck with what I have told you, if you compare the products of the industry of the two insects which we have been talking about. The production of the caterpillar is entirely inferior to that of the silk-worm, both in point of beauty and utility. It is not abso-

lutely useless, but is only of service to the insect itself, in which it bears a resemblance to selfish people, who, when they do good, do it only for their own interest, or to gratify their pride, or from some other motive equally selfish. The silk-worm, on the contrary, is as useful as the other is useless, as I will now show you:—

When the cocoons are taken from the broom, they are passed through a furnace in order to destroy the chrysalis, because, if the butterfly were formed, it would pierce the cocoon in coming out, and would thus render it incapable of furnishing silk. Afterwards, with the help of boiling water, the cocoons are wound, and a silk is obtained whose fineness depends on the quality of the worms, and the manner in which they are reeled. After this, the silk is prepared and passed to the dyer, who gives it the desired colour. It has then a degree of lustre and brilliancy which no other substance is capable of acquiring. This is the silk of which the finest stuffs are made; they are pliable, light, warm and very pleasant to wear. Stockings, gloves, bonnets, &c. are made of it as well as dresses. The cocoons which have been kept to form the butterflies, that are to produce eggs for the following year; the tangled threads; the bad cocoons which could not be wound; the soft fuzz which is taken off before winding, all this, I say, is of use, and furnishes a thread less fine

and soft than the other, but which is stronger to wear, and is converted into stockings and stuffs of great thickness and strength.

You see, then, after all, children, that the silk-worm, although so poor in appearance, is nevertheless a valuable gift from God to man, for which he ought to thank him. These insects form the wealth of the countries where they can be raised in great abundance.

Louisa now took the cocoons from off the broom. She then had them wound, and Julia and herself applied themselves with great eagerness to the task of knitting the stockings. They wished to knit a pair for their mother and father and one for Charles. It was a somewhat tedious task, especially as it had to be done without any interruption to the lessons and to the cares of house-keeping, in which Louisa was now beginning to take part; but she found out a way to put to some useful account all the little moments in regard to which she had been in the habit of saying, "It is not worth while to take up my work for such a little while."

If she was going into the garden or to make a little visit, she took her stocking with her. In this way she finished it much sooner than she expected, and was amply repaid by her mother's approval, who encouraged her much to continue to make a good use of odd moments. For, said she, "Young girls

do not know what harm they are doing themselves in squandering away their time. They never make any progress, and oftentimes they form a habit which lasts their whole life long. The evil effects of such habits become more apparent, in proportion as the occupations in which they engage increase in importance."

As to Julia, she applied herself with good will to managing the easy part, which had the advantage of making her take an interest in what she was doing and of producing a desire to become more and more dexterous.

At length the day arrived on which Louisa and Julia were to give the stockings to their parents. It was quite a happy event; the present was accepted and worn with joy and thanks, and the two girls felt pleasure in having spent their leisure moments in an employment so useful, and which was the source of so much pleasure to those they loved.

Would that all our young friends could be persuaded that the secret of true happiness lies in having all our time usefully employed for ends which our own consciences approve, and which we have reason to believe are well pleasing to God.

THE FISHERMEN AND THE MAGICIAN.

One morning early, before Lydia and Louisa were out of their room, some one knocked at the door, and the voice of Charles was heard, addressing Louisa.

"Sister, are you not ready yet. Come quick and see; the magicians of former times have never produced greater wonders than what has come to pass under our very eyes; a town—a whole town—has sprung up in one night upon the sea-shore."

Louisa began to laugh, and said, "These must be very skilful architects, indeed."

Charles. You will not believe me, I suppose; but you have only to go to the window to convince yourself by your own eyes of the truth of what I say. Afterwards do you come down with Lydia; for we are going to pay a visit to this new town and will wait for you."

Louisa went back into her room. Lydia had heard her conversation with Charles, and the two friends were eager to open the window, in order to have an explanation of the wonder which had been made

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known to them. They saw,—not indeed a town,—but four or five rows of tents arranged with regularity, and forming streets at right angles with each other. In front of these tents were seen women and children seated, others who were coming and going, and men who seemed very busy. Some were putting a boat afloat, others were getting ready their nets. In short, the shore, generally desolate and silent, presented at this instant an animated and picturesque scene.

After having looked at it for some moments, Lydia and Louisa went down as quickly as possible into the parlour.

"Well," said Charles, "was I not right? Has not a beautiful town been reared last night upon the seashore?"

Louisa. It is not exactly a town; and now that I have seen it, I understand how it could be built in a single night. I see also that fishermen are the architects; but how so many of them have got together, or where they came from, I do not know

Mrs. Beaumont. I will give you the details which I have collected from Mr. P——, the obliging proprietor of this establishment.

These fishermen form a sort of little colony by themselves. They are composed of Italians and French. They speak a dialect which partakes of both languages and which you must be at some

trouble to understand. They are too numerous to go all together; they therefore divide themselves into companies, and each company agrees where it will establish itself. They remain there a longer or shorter time, and exchange stations, in order that each company may have in turn the good or bad luck of the different stations.

To some this shore has been assigned. Yesterday one of them came on an embassy to know whether they could fix themselves here, which was granted without hesitation. After this they disembarked; they all commenced operations; and as the brilliancy of the moonlight and the calmness of the night were favourable to them they have made quick work. By this morning all their arrangements have been completed, and the result is a scene which has a charming effect. Their method of fishing will amuse you much. I am very glad that they have come while we are here.

Charles. They are already in the way of getting ready their boats and their nets, which they will soon cast into the sea. If you choose, we can go and pay them a visit. They say that it is a very curious sight; and, besides, a sail on the sea would be very pleasant this fine weather. These ladies may go with us, if they are sufficiently courageous.

Mrs. Beaumont. It does not require any very remarkable degree of courage to make an excursion on

the sea in calm and fine weather; so Lydia, Louisa and myself will go with you. They will come to tell us when the fishermen are ready to set out. Meanwhile we can go to breakfast.

Our young friends made haste to satisfy their hunger, and for fear of missing any thing, they repaired to the beach before they had been called. They had to wait; but their eyes were delighted to see the activity which reigned upon the shore, and enlivened the sea. The fishermen were all anxious to profit by the fine weather, and a number of boats, large and small, were already ploughing the waters. Their sails, illumined by the rays of the sun, appeared of a dazzling whiteness. Farther on, on the open sea, were beheld two or three large vessels which were hastening on with full sails towards the town of C——.

Lydia. Oh what a beautiful sight is the sea! I am never tired of looking at it. There is always something new in it to me."

Mrs. Beaumont. In truth, it presents very different aspects. What resemblance is there between this smooth and calm sea which we behold to-day, and to which you feel disposed to trust yourself with entire security, and the sea, lashed into fury, as we saw it some days ago?

Charles. It looked beautiful in its fury, and I would not have missed the sight on any account.

The foaming waves advanced like mountains and threatened to bury every thing. Sometimes they divided and disclosed a deep gulf; if there had been a vessel there, (said I to myself,) what a terrible fate would it have met!

Lydia. I was thinking of the mothers, the daughters, and the wives of the fishermen, when they have reason to apprehend that a storm has overtaken their frail barks. What distress these poor creatures must endure! and what need have they to confide themselves to the protection of the all-powerful God, who is ruler of the waters and of the winds.

Mr. Beaumont. In these moments of danger the most faithless, even, feel the necessity of putting themselves under the protection of God. Indeed nothing in the world is more fitted to make us feel our weakness and our nothingness than a tempest. Those who are in a vessel thus exposed, see death over their heads and under their feet; they are beset with danger on every side. All human aid abandons them; nothing can afford them any assistance. They are entirely and plainly in the hand of God. "For he commandeth, and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof. They mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths: their soul is melted because of trouble. They reel to and fro, and stagger like

a drunken man, and are at their wits' end." Oh! at the sight of such a spectacle, in presence of these gulfs which disclose themselves; of these frightful roarings of the winds and of the furious waves; of this confusion of nature, when life appears every instant about to terminate, it is then that we are forced to exclaim with the prophet, "Who shall not fear thee, O King of nations, for to thee doth it appertain."

"Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he bringeth them out of their distresses. He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still. Then are they glad because they be quiet; so he bringeth them unto their desired haven. Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men! Let them exalt him also in the congregation of the people, and praise him in the assembly of the elders."

But happy are those who do not wait for these critical moments to recognise the omnipotence of God, and who are always kept near their Saviour, whom they have learned to know, love and obey.

Louisa. What most astonished me, when I saw the sea so furious, was that it did not go farther up upon the banks; for when I saw the lofty height and prodigious force of the waves, I thought that

they would reach the house; while, all of a sudden, they fell and broke upon the sand!

Mr. Beaumont. A barrier, more effectual than any that man could put up, restrained them; it was the powerful will of God which made these proud waves die on the shore. It is his voice which says, "Thus far shalt thou come but no farther."

Charles. I think they are soon going to call us; it seems to me that the boat is ready.

Mr. Beaumont. Yes, but the nets are not; and we will have time, if you choose, to go into one of the tents to see what it looks like. Here is one, in front of which a woman is knitting. Let us go in.

They went in. The dwelling indeed was not very convenient, since a very tall person could not stand up in it; but there were the means of repose, and all the necessary utensils for a small establishment.

Louisa. How do they manage their cooking? for they cannot light a fire in their tents.

Mr. Beaumont. No, they light a fire in the open air, and use it after the manner of the gipsies, whom you have seen sometimes.

Charles. I like very much to look at these fishermen. They go through all their operations with great vivacity; their cast of countenance is intelligent; their complexion is so tanned by the sun that they have the appearance of mulattoes. Their dress adds, also, to the singularity of their appearance: they

wear Catalan caps, they have brown jackets, their pantaloons are generally red, and their legs always bare. I have never seen any thing like them.

Mr. Beaumont. There is indeed something singular about their appearance, which you will find heightened if you see them after their return from their fishing expedition. If it has been unsuccessful, they show their disappointment by oaths and blasphemies in a terrible manner. If successful, they show it by songs and gay dances; so that both in their sadness and also in their joy they manifest what man is in himself, profane and carnal, and thoughtless of the Giver of all good. We shall be able to see this in the evening, after they know the result of their fishing excursion.

Louisa. Now every thing is ready. I see no more nets on the shore, and a fisherman is advancing towards us to ask us to get on board.

These fishermen have nets of an enormous size. In order to cast them, they frequently go more than three miles from the shore. At short intervals they place empty barrels, which mark the spot where the net is and sustain it in the water. When the net is in its proper place, they bring back to the shore the ropes which are attached at the two ends. These ropes are then fixed to a cable, and when the net has remained in the sea the requisite time they double it upon itself by means of this cable, and thus enclose in the

net and collect upon the shore, the fish which have been taken.

It was this first operation of casting the net that our friends were anxious to see. Charles was enchanted. He ran from one side of the boat to the other, and screamed continually, as if he thought that it was going to upset; which amused Lydia and Lousia without frightening them, for the weather was so calm that the boat rocked very little, and there was no cause for fear. When the fishermen had finished, they returned to the shore, well pleased with their expedition.

Now, said Charles, that we have seen them cast in their net, we must see them draw it out again. I am impatient to know whether their "luck" has been good.

Mr. Beaumont. Your mother, these ladies and myself, want to rest ourselves. Besides, you must know that a net of this size is not drawn out a few moments after it is cast in. You would have to wait several hours. They will not be ready for it before evening; and as at that time your cousins will have come back from bathing, we will all go together to see the operation.

Although Charles did not doubt the good will of the fishermen, with which he had made ample acquaintance in the course of the morning, he performed, nevertheless, many excursions, as the hour approach-

ed, in the fear that they would forget to let them know. At last they told him that they were ready to begin; and he ran to get all the party together, who followed him with eagerness.

Mr. Beaumont. We must not be idle lookers-on here. You have seen the immense size of the net, and it is to be hoped that its weight is now increased by a large number of fishes. It is no small job to draw them to the shore. The united strength of the men, with their wives and children, may not be sufficient for it; so that they will accept with pleasure all the hands which offer to assist them, and they will allow those who apply themselves to the work to partake of the fruits of their fishing. Every one will have his plate full of fishes, smaller or larger, according as his strength allows him to afford more or less assistance. Come, children, to the work! Let us take hold of the cable.

It was in the midst of shouts of laughter that our young people, great and small, and even the ladies, applied themselves to the cable. They stood in a row, and pulled altogether each with as much strength as he or she could. The fishermen were arranged at the end of the cable, and at the part which was next the net, and all those who could help them were stationed in the middle of it. The ladies pulled as long as they could, but soon gave out.

Paul kept up longer, as a point of honour, but was

at last obliged to leave off; and there were only Mr. Beaumont and Charles who held out until the fishermen said, "It is all over, the net is upon the shore."

It is a curious sight to see these fishermen, whose sun-burned figures express with much energy by turns the feelings of fear and hope. Their wives partook of these feelings; and their children learned to read in the eyes of their parents whether they ought to be cheerful or sad. All at once a fisherman who was examining the net exclaimed, "the luck is good; very good!" At this sound cries of joy were heard on every side. Some laughed, others sung. Soon they joined hands and performed a dance around the net. All our friends drew near again to behold this singular spectacle. This burst of joy soon ceased, and the next impulse was to ascertain the contents of the net. The nearest fisherman looked at it with attention, as if some horrible object had burst upon his sight. He whispered some words to his neighbours, who immediately took up pick-axes, which were near by, and began to dig a hole some distance off.

What is the meaning of this singular pantomime, said Charles to his father. They have the look of crazy persons.

A fisherman who had heard Charles, replied: "My young friend, you see this fish, to all appearance it has the form of a ray-fish, only larger. Some magi-

cian has put it into our net; or rather it is the magician himself. If we should be so unfortunate as to touch it, it would cause us insupportable pains; and who knows what might happen afterwards? Now we are going to bury it as quickly as possible, and when all is over we shall have nothing to fear from it."

It was as much as Charles could do to keep from laughing at the man. However he did, (for he had the look of one who was in earnest and very much frightened), but turned to his father to ask an explanation.

Mr. Beaumont. I need not tell you that the ideas of this man are completely false. But they have some likeness to the truth. This fish, when touched, gives pain, but not such as the fisherman supposes. Call the ladies and we will try it.

When the fishermen saw that Mr. Beaumont was disposed to touch this dangerous fish, they besought him not to attempt it; but when they perceived that he persisted, they withdrew, as if unwilling to be spectators of what might happen.

"Let us make haste," said Mr. Beaumont. "If we wait until the fish is dead, the effect of which I have spoken to you will not take place. Touch it with this piece of wood, Charles. What do you feel?"

Charles. A little numbness at the elbow, but it is almost nothing, father.

Mr. Beaumont. We will make a second trial. Do you give me your hand, Charles; now I will touch the fish with this little iron cane.

Paul. Oh! oh! who has given me a blow on the elbow? Somebody did.

Charles. (laughing.) It is the fish; I know now, father. It is an electric shock; but how can this fish give it? I do not understand it at all.

Mr. Beaumont. We must not leave the fishermen at present. They are going to make a distribution of their gains, and we must receive our wages. You do not wish to relinquish your claim to your portion, do you?

Charles. No, indeed; especially since we will have a heartier appetite, on account of the fatigue which we have undergone.

Mr. Beaumont. Let us wait then. Afterwards we will sit down, and I will give you some account of this fish-magician and of its wonderful effects.

The fishermen who had prepared the hole and the one who had sent them, returned. They had a disturbed air, on account of what they thought was going to happen to Mr. Beaumont. He, however, encouraged them, and sought to persuade them that there was no danger, but a superstition like this cannot be uprooted in a single conversation. However they seemed struck when Mr. Beaumont told them that

he had touched the fish while it was still alive, and that no accident had happened either to himself, or to any of his family; nevertheless they took the fish with great precautions and went to bury it.

Before dividing the fishes among themselves, the men began by filling plates with a part of them, and by giving some to all those who had been of assistance in drawing in the net. Charles received one of the largest parts, for he had worked with much energy, and had held out until it was all over. They sent all their shares to the house, expecting to make an excellent breakfast of them the next morning.

They stood by afterwards, at the division of the main portion of the fish, which was not effected without a few high words; these, however, led to no serious dispute. After this, our friends left the families of the different fishermen to arrange the shares which were adjudged to them, and went a little further off in order to enjoy a little quiet. They perceived a fisherman who had left to his wife the care of arranging their portion of the fish, and who was fishing with a line off a little promontory. Surprised at this, Mr. Beaumont went up to him to question him, and soon returned to tell his children that after a considerable draught of fishes, there were still left a large number of the wolf-fish, (so called on account of its voracity,) that they could easily be

taken with the line, and that this fisherman wished to catch some of them to sell to the merchant who was accustomed to buy them.

"I begin to feel the need of rest," said Mr. Beaumont, sitting down; "we have gone through a good deal of fatigue. I would not like to do as much every day."

Charles. As to myself, I have a little pain in my hands and in my arms, but that will not prevent my going to assist at the next haul of the net, if I am here. We have certainly spent a very amusing day.

Lydia. And besides we have seen things of which we had no idea before.

Paul. I am all impatience to know about that fish that gave me such a blow on the elbow. It is so surprising, that I am not astonished that the fishermen take it for a magician.

Mr. Beaumont. Charles already understands that it was electricity which caused the phenomenon.

Sophia. I know scarcely any more for that. I understand the word, but not the thing.

Mr. Beaumont. It is not here that I can explain it to you; I will only explain to you its effects.

Louisa. We know better than Paul and Sophia what electricity is, although we still have need of other instruction on the subject, which I should be glad to receive.

Mr. Beaumont. As soon as I have the opportunity, I will let you see an electrical machine, and at the same time will give you some explanations of it. For the present, I will only tell you that electricity is a fluid existing in all bodies, and transmitting itself from one to another with more or less rapidity, and more or less sensible results, according to the nature of these bodies; and that this transmission produces very curious phenomena.

So there are some kinds of fish which have the faculty of giving out this electric fluid in abundance. So soon as you touch them you draw it out and receive the shock which you have felt.

Sophia. But uncle, when Charles touched the fish with his stick, he said that he scarcely felt any thing; while, on the other hand, when you touched it, although I was separated from you by many persons, I felt a very violent and sensible blow. The whole of my arm was benumbed for some moments.

Mr. Beaumont. It is because Charles touched it with a stick and I touched it with an iron rod, a substance which has the property of drawing out and conducting the electric fluid.

Lydia. What is the name of the fish which produces such strange effects?

Mr. Beaumont. It is called the torpedo, and this name, which is taken from the Latin, is given it on

account of the feeling of numbness occasioned by touching it. You may perceive that the body, without the tail, has the form of a circle, incomplete in the portion where the head is formed. The head is so large that you confound it with the rest of the body, so that at first sight one is tempted to believe that it has no head. The torpedo is found upon the shores of the district of Aunis, of Gascony, and on those of the Mediterranean. It does not attain much size, particularly in our latitude; they are two feet in length. When the torpedo is dead, it ceases to give electric shocks. Those which we have felt have been weak, because the fish, having been for several moments out of the water, had already lost part of its vitality. We should have received much stronger shocks if we had touched it as soon as it was taken out.

Lydia. To what is the very singular power of the torpedo to produce this feeling supposed to be owing?

Mr. Beaumont. On examining the interior of the torpedo, the muscles are found to be arranged in cylindrical pipes, parallel to one another, and perpendicular to the back and to the stomach; and it has been thought that this was the electric battery which produces the numbness or blow when the torpedo is touched. Every method has been tried to

produce sparks, but they have never been obtained, either from this or from any other electric fish.

Louisa. The torpedo is not then the only fish which produces such strange effects?

Mr. Beaumont. It is the only one in this country. In South America, under the torrid zone, there is the electric eel. It makes its abode in places where streams issue from the rocks under which it delights to conceal itself. There is also found a fish called the Trembler, in some rivers of Africa and in the river Niger. These names arise from the shock they give resembling that of the torpedo. There is also the eel-torpedo. It resembles the ordinary eel. The electric effects of these fish have much resemblance to those of the torpedo. The general characteristics of electric fish are, that they are without scales. They have a thick skin, which is dotted with little holes, much more numerous about the head.

Charles. I am very glad to know something of these fish, and should be glad to have some acquaintance with the general classification of fishes. Could you not tell us something about them, father?

Mr. Beaumont. I do not know enough of them to give you such an account as you ought to have, but I will furnish you with some book about them.

Louisa. Only one word, father; what is the science called which treats of fishes?

Mr. Beaumont. Ichthyology. But if we cannot consider fishes at present in a scientific point of view, we can, at least, consider their usefulness as an article of food. You have learned not a little about that since you have been here. You have discovered what rich varieties of fishes there are, all with different flavours. It is an immense resource for food for countries situated on the sea-coast, and the prompt and easy communications which are now established has supplied places which were formerly unable to obtain them.

Lydia. And then, of what very great use are salted and smoked fish. They can be carried everywhere; anchovies, sardines, codfish and herrings, for instance, and some, (such as herrings,) being cheap, are within the reach of the poorest.

Charles. I have made an acquaintance to-day with some new kinds of shells. After the great storm the other day, I found more than ever I had before; but this morning the fishermen have given me a small number, among which there are some beautiful ones. Look, here are some of them.

Mr. Beaumont. Yes; we will carry them away and study their classification, and arrange them in order. Meanwhile, we can make some use of them. They teach us what a great variety of means God has employed to preserve the creatures he has created.

We are accustomed to see animals whose flesh and muscles are kept together by a kind of interior frame of bones; in those which are found here, on the contrary, this bony part surrounds the animal and protects its delicate substance against accidents.

Sophia. How are these shells formed? Do they grow with the animal, or do they find them ready made and place themselves in it?

Mr. Beaumont. There is one kind of mollusca which ——

Paul. Uncle, I do not know what mollusca are.

Mr. Beaumont. They are animals whose flesh is soft, having only muscles and no bones. There is one of them, called Bernard the Hermit,* which has no shell; and, feeling the need of a habitation, he goes in quest of one, and takes possession of the first one which he finds to suit him. They say that sometimes he even expels the rightful owner.

Paul. This Bernard the Hermit must be a curious creature.

Mr. Beaumont. Those which are to furnish a habitation for themselves have their bodies pierced with a number of little holes, through which a slimy matter escapes mixed with chalky particles,

* For an interesting account of this singular animal, see § ix. of "Six Days' Wonder," published by the American Sunday-school Union. It is a very entertaining and instructive volume.

which hardens when exposed, and forms the first layer of the shell; in this manner a second and a third layer are formed, until the shell has attained the necessary degree of strength. You will understand then, that it is always on the interior that new layers are formed, and that those which you see enveloping the others are of the first formation.

Lydia. This mode of formation explains why, when the shells are broken, they separate into thin layers, like puff paste.

Louisa. I should think that the classification of shells would be attended with difficulties, on account of their great variety.

Mr. Beaumont. All the works of nature are in the same case. Shells are divided into three great classes, Univalves, or those of a single piece; Bivalves, or those in two pieces; and the Multivalves, or those in many pieces. On our return to C——, while we are engaged with the fish, we will also devote some time to the shells, and with a little trouble we shall be able to classify all those which you have collected.

Charles. That will be a very pleasant occupation, and I am glad that I have made such a good collection of shells, and that I can show them to Mr. Clement and Henry.

Mrs. Beaumont. You will be able to make it an interesting one; for there are shells of all sizes, forms and colours. I will endeavour to procure some of those which you cannot get; but I hope we shall be able to carry away with us a great variety; so many and such beautiful ones of different kinds are to be picked up on this shore. When the sea is strongly agitated they are carried to a very great distance, and the shells of animals which live in very remote countries are found. In places very far from the sea are found fossil shells, that is to say, shells which have been for ages buried in the earth, which have lost their original nature and have become petrifactions, preserving only their form.

Lydia. It is near night. Had we not better return?

Charles. It is not so late as you think. If father consents to it, I should like to pay another visit to the fishermen, to see if they have concluded the sale of their fish, and whether they are satisfied.

Mr. Beaumont. We can easily do it; it is not too late.

Paul. They are busy in preparing their suppers. Is not that a lighted fire which I see in this tent?

Lydia. No. I have been watching it for some

moments, and I cannot make out what it is. It shines like fire, although there are neither flames nor coals.

Mr. Beaumont. Let us draw near. We have seen the electric fish, now let us see the phosphorescent.

Charles. So it is. It is the fishes that are shining so. It will be still brighter when the night grows darker.

Louisa. It is already very pretty. What are these fish, father?

Mr. Beaumont. There are a great variety. I could not tell you them all. I know that the sardines are phosphorescent, and there must be many of them among these.

Sophia. Look at the carts on which they are loading the fish. It seems that they are sold, and that they are going to take advantage of the cool night to carry them away.

Charles. The fishermen have now spread out their nets to dry; but look what a quantity of rubbish, and weeds and trash they have taken, which they have thrown away.

Mr. Beaumont. While your attention was occupied with the torpedo and with all that you saw around you, that was so new to you, you did not notice that before making a general distribution of the fishes, some of the fishermen came around the

net in which the good and bad were promiscuously huddled. They carefully preserved the good fish, but threw away all the rest.

Lydia. I paid attention to it, sir; and it reminded me of the parable of the net in the gospel; but I said nothing about it, as we were scattered, and occupied with different things. I did not think it proper to tell you all my thoughts.

Paul. Lydia is right. The parable shows us exactly what the fishermen are doing. I can repeat it to you, for mother made me learn it one day. "The kingdom of heaven is like unto a net that was cast into the sea and gathered of every kind; which, when it was full they drew to shore, and sat down and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away. So shall it be at the end of the world; the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

Mr. Beaumont. Very well, Paul; I am very glad that you have learned these passages of God's word, and that you can recall them in such a fit way.

Paul. I am very fond of learning the narratives of the Bible and the parables of the New Testament. Mother explains them to me when I do not understand them.

Mr. Beaumont. Do you understand the parable which you have been repeating to us?

Paul. Oh yes, uncle, I think I do a little. Our Saviour wishes to teach us that although in this world the good and the bad are mixed together, it will not always be so; but that at the last judgment, he will make a final separation. The wicked will be sent to hell, but the just, that is to say those who have believed in him as their Redeemer and trusted in his mercy, and have kept his commandments in love, shall go and enjoy with him eternal happiness.

Louisa. Is not the same truth taught us in the parable of the tares? "The servants said to their master, Wilt thou then that we go and gather up the tares. But he said nay, lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest; and in the time of harvest I will say unto the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them; but gather the wheat into my barn!"

Mr. Beaumont. Yes. This parable teaches the same truth. But if we ought to let the tares grow with the wheat until the time pointed out by the Lord of the harvest, we ought to keep guard over ourselves, and root out of our hearts the tares of sin,

which spring up but too easily. And to this end let us not only be watchful, but prayerful; for without the aid of our heavenly Father we can do nothing.

We soon bent our steps homewards, and after uniting with us in our family worship, our young friends retired to seek that repose which their fatigue had rendered necessary and grateful.

Many evenings were pleasantly passed in the same way, and all of them left the impression on the minds of the whole party, that God's works and ways are all wonderful, and that to love and obey him is the highest duty of his intelligent creatures.